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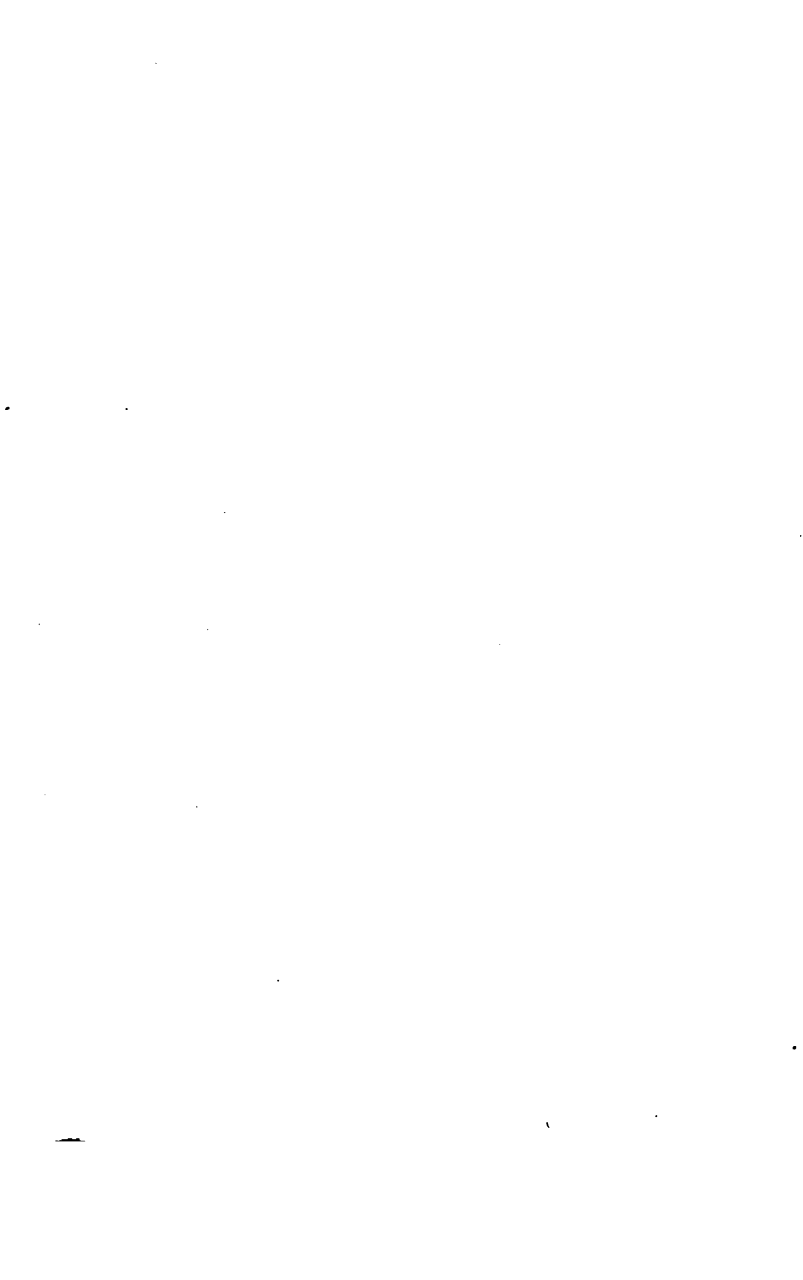
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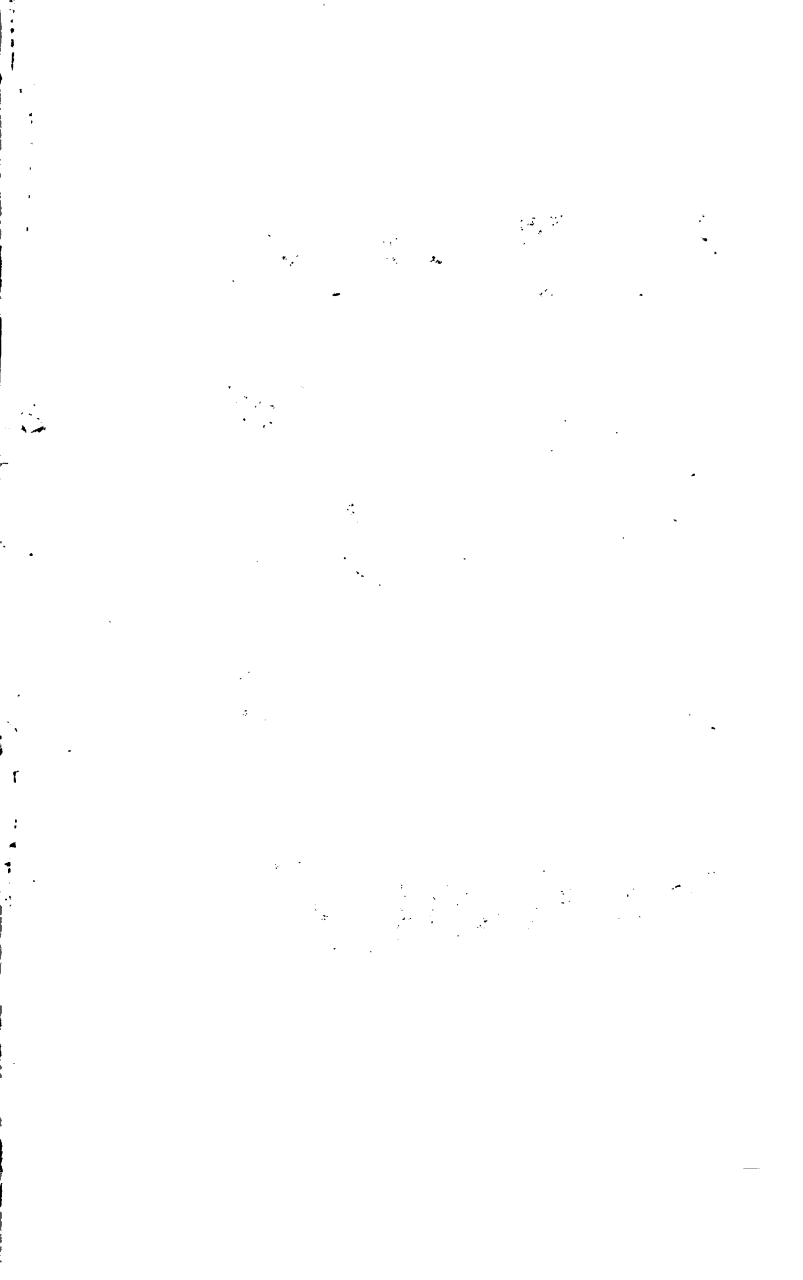
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HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

13325

The Song of

HIAWATHA

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

MINNEHAHA EDITION

With Illustrations.



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HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The Song of Hiawatha first appeared in 1855. In it Mr. Longfellow has woven together the beautiful traditions of the American Indians into one grand and delightful epic poem. The melodies of its rhythm and measure flow from his classic pen in unison with the hoof-beats of the bison, the tremulous thunder of the Falls of Minnehaha, the paddle strokes of the Indian canoeist, and he has done more to immortalize in song and story the life and environments of the red man of America than any other writer, save perhaps J. Fenimore Cooper. It was from a perusal of the Finnish epic "Kalevala" that both the measure and the style of "Hiawatha" was suggested to Mr. Longfellow. In fact, it might appropriately be named the "Kalevala" of North America. Mr. Longfellow derived his knowledge of Indian legends from Schoolcraft's *Algic Researches* and other books, from Heckewelder's *Narratives*, from Black Hawk, with his display of Sacs and Foxes on Boston Common, and from the Ojibway chief, Kahge-gah-bowh, whom he entertained at his own home.

Hiawatha had a wide circulation, both in America and Europe, and was universally admired by readers and critics on both Continents. Large audiences gathered to hear it read by public readers. It was set to music by Stoepel, and at the Boston Theater it was rendered with explanatory readings by the famous elocutionist, Matilda Heron. The highest encomiums were passed upon it by such critics of ripe scholarship as Emerson and Hawthorne. A part of it was translated into Latin and used as an academic text book. Those who wish to read more about it will find interest and pleasure in perusing the masterly criticisms of Dr. O. W. Holmes in the *Annals of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, and that of Horatio Hale in the *Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1881.



THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.



INTRODUCTION.

SHOULD you ask me,
whence these stories?
Whence these legends and
traditions,
With the odors of the forest,
With the dew and damp of
meadows,
With the curling smoke of
wigwams, 5
With the rushing of great
rivers,
With their frequent repetitions,

And their wild reverberations,
As of thunder in the mountains?

I should answer, I should tell you, 10

“From the forests and the prairies,
From the great lakes of the Northland,
From the land of the Ojibways,
From the land of the Dacotahs,
From the mountains, moors, and fen-lands, 15
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.

I repeat them as I heard them

From the lips of Nawadaha,

The musician, the sweet singer.” 20

Should you ask where Nawadaha
Found these songs so wild and wayward,

Found these legends and traditions,

I should answer, I should tell you,

“In the bird’s-nests of the forest, 25

In the lodges of the beaver,

In the hoof-prints of the bison,

In the eyry of the eagle!

“All the wild-fowl sang them to him,

In the moorlands and the fen-lands, 30

In the melancholy marshes;

Chetowaik, the plover, sang them,

INTRODUCTION.

9

Mahn, the loon, the wild goose, Wawa,
The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah
And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!" 35

If still further you should ask me,
Saying, "Who was Nawadaha?
Tell us of this Nawadaha,"
I should answer your inquiries
Straightway in such words as follow. 40

"In the Vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley,
By the pleasant water-courses,
Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.
Round about the Indian village 45
Spread the meadows and the cornfields,
And beyond them stood the forest,
Stood the groves of singing pine-trees,
Green in Summer, white in Winter,
Ever sighing, ever singing. 50

"And the pleasant water-courses,
You could trace them through the valley,
By the rushing in the Spring-time,
By the alders in the Summer,
By the white fog in the Autumn, 55
By the black line in the Winter;
And beside them dwelt the singer,

In the vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley.

“There he sang of Hiawatha, 60
Sang the Song of Hiawatha,
Sang his wondrous birth and being,
How he prayed and how he fasted,
How he lived, and toiled, and suffered,
That the tribes of men might prosper, 65
That he might advance his people!”

Ye who love the haunts of Nature,
Love the sunshine of the meadow,
Love the shadow of the forest,
Love the wind among the branches, 70
And the rain-shower and the snow-storm,
And the rushing of great rivers
Through their palisades of pine-trees,
And the thunder in the mountains,
Whose innumerable echoes 75
Flap like eagles in their eyries;—
Listen to these wild traditions,
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye who love a nation's legends, 80
Love the ballads of a people,
That like voices from afar off
Call to us to pause and listen,

INTRODUCTION.

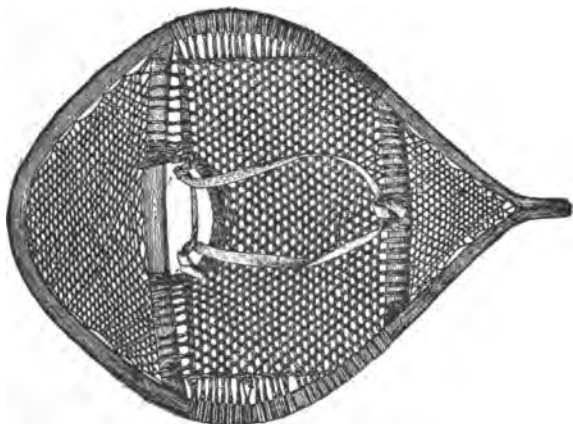
II

Speak in tones so plain and childlike,
 Scarcely can the ear distinguish
 Whether they are sung or spoken;— 85
 Listen to this Indian Legend,
 To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
 Who have faith in God and Nature,
 Who believe that in all ages 90
 Every human heart is human,
 That in even savage bosoms
 There are longings, yearnings, strivings
 For the good they comprehend not,
 That the feeble hands and helpless, 95
 Groping blindly in the darkness,
 Touch God's right hand in that darkness,
 And are lifted up and strengthened;—
 Listen to this simple story,
 To this song of Hiawatha! 100

Ye who sometimes, in your rambles
 Through the green lanes of the country,
 Where the tangled barberry-bushes
 Hang their tufts of crimson berries
 Over stone walls gray with mosses, 105
 Pause by some neglected graveyard,
 For a while to muse, and ponder

On a half-effaced inscription,
Written with little skill of song-craft,
Homely phrases, but each letter 110
Full of hope and yet of heart-break,
Full of all the tender pathos
Of the Here and the Hereafter;—
Stay and read this rude inscription,
Read this song of Hiawatha! 115



Ojibway Snow Shoe.



"Smoked the Calumet, the Peace-Pipe."

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.



I.

THE PEACE-PIPE.

IN the Mountains of the
Prairie,
On the great Red Pipe-
stone Quarry,
Gitche Manito, the
mighty,

He the Master of Life, descending,
On the red crags of the quarry 5
Stood erect, and called the nations,
Called the tribes of men together.

From his footprints flowed a river,
Leaped into the light of morning,
O'er the precipice plunging downward 10

14 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Gleamed like Ishkoodah, the comet.
And the Spirit, stooping earthward,
With his finger on the meadow
Traced a winding pathway for it,
Saying to it, "Run in this way!" 15

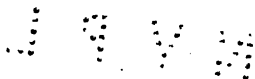
From the red stone of the quarry
With his hand he broke a fragment,
Moulded it into into a pipe-head,
Shaped and fashioned it with figures;
From the margin of the river 20

Took a long reed for a pipe-stem,
With its dark green leaves upon it,
Filled the pipe with bark of willow,
With the bark of the red willow;
Breathed upon the neighboring forest, 25

Made its great boughs chafe together,
Till in flame they burst and kindled;
And erect upon the mountains,
Gitche Manito, the mighty,
Smoked the calumet, the Peace-Pipe, 30
As a signal to the nations.



And the smoke rose slowly, slowly,
Through the tranquil air of morning,



THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 15

First a single line of darkness,
Then a denser, bluer vapor, 35
Then a snow-white cloud unfolding,
Like the tree-tops of the forest,
Ever rising, rising, rising,
Till it touched the top of heaven,
Till it broke against the heaven, 40
And rolled outward all around it.

From the Vale of Tawasentha,
From the Valley of Wyoming,
From the groves of Tuscaloosa,
From the far-off Rocky Mountains, 45
From the Northern lakes and rivers,
All the tribes beheld the signal,
Saw the distant smoke ascending,
The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe.

And the Prophets of the nations 50
Said: "Behold it, the Pukwana!
By this signal from afar off,
Bending like a wand of willow,
Waving like a hand that beckons,
Gitche Manito, the mighty, 55
Calls the tribes of men together,
Calls the warriors to his council!"

Down the rivers, o'er the prairies,

16 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Came the warriors of the nations,
Came the Delawares and Mohawks, 60
Came the Choctaws and Camanches,
Came the Shoshonies and Blackfeet,
Came the Pawnees and Omahas,
Came the Mandans and Dacotahs,
Came the Hurons and Ojibways, 65
All the warriors drawn together
By the signal of the Peace-Pipe,
To the Mountains of the Prairie,
To the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry.

And they stood there on the meadow, 70
With their weapons and their war-gear,
Painted like the leaves of Autumn,
Painted like the sky of morning,
Wildly glaring at each other;
In their faces stern defiance, 75
In their hearts the feuds of ages,
The hereditary hatred,
The ancestral thirst of vengeance.

Gitche Manito, the mighty,
The creator of the nations, 80
Looked upon them with compassion,
With paternal love and pity;
Looked upon their wrath and wrangling

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 47

But as quarrels among children,
But as feuds and fights of children! 85

Over them he stretched his right hand,
To subdue their stubborn natures,
To allay their thirst and fever,
By the shadow of his right hand;
Spake to them with voice majestic 90
As the sound of far-off waters

Falling into deep abysses,
Warning, chiding, spake in this wise:—

“O my children! my poor children!
Listen to the words of wisdom, 95
Listen to the words of warning,
From the lips of the Great Spirit,
From the Master of Life, who made you!

“I have given you lands to hunt in,
I have given you streams to fish in, 100
I have given you bear and bison,
I have given you roe and reindeer,
I have given you brant and beaver,
Filled the marshes full of wild fowl,
Filled the rivers full of fishes; 105

Why then are you not contented?
Why then will you hunt each other?

“I am weary of your quarrels,

Weary of your wars and bloodshed,
Weary of your prayers for vengeance, 110
Of your wranglings and dissensions;
All your strength is in your union,
All your danger is in discord;
Therefore be at peace henceforward,
And as brothers live together. 115

“I will send a Prophet to you,
A Deliverer of the nations,
Who shall guide you and shall teach you,
Who shall toil and suffer with you.
If you listen to his counsels, 120
You will multiply and prosper;
If his warnings pass unheeded,
You will fade away and perish!

“Bathe now in the stream before you,
Wash the war-paint from your faces, 125
Wash the blood-stains from your fingers,
Bury your war-clubs and your weapons,
Break the red stone from this quarry,
Mould and make it into Peace-Pipes,
Take the reeds that grow beside you, 130
Deck them with your brightest feathers,
Smoke the calumet together,
And as brothers live henceforward!”

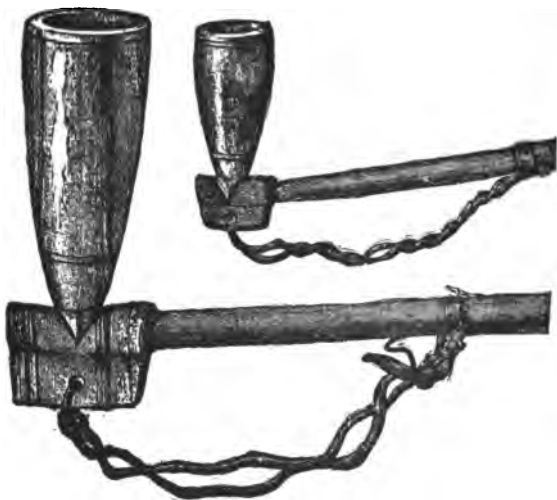
Then upon the ground the warriors
Threw their cloaks and shirts of deer-skin, 135
Threw their weapons and their war-gear,
Leaped into the rushing river,
Washed the war-paint from their faces.
Clear above them flowed the water,
Clear and limpid from the footprints 140
Of the Master of Life descending;
Dark below them flowed the water,
Soiled and stained with streaks of crimson,
As if blood were mingled with it!

From the river came the warriors, 145
Clean and washed from all their war-paint;
On the banks their clubs they buried,
Buried all their warlike weapons,
Gitche Manito, the mighty,
The Great Spirit, the creator, 150
Smiled upon his helpless children!

And in silence all the warriors
Broke the red stone of the quarry,
Smoothed and formed it into Peace-Pipes,
Broke the long reeds by the river, 155
Decked them with their brightest feathers,
And departed each one homeward,
While the Master of Life, ascending,

20 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Through the opening of cloud-curtains,
Through the doorways of the heaven, 160
Vanished from before their faces,
In the smoke that rolled around him,
The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe!



"Break the red stone from this quarry,
Mould and make it into Peace-Pipes."



"I have given you bear and bison."



II.

THE FOUR WINDS.

ONOR be to Mudje-
keewis!"

Cried the warriors,
cried the old
men,

When he came in triumph homeward
With the sacred Belt of Wampum,
From the regions of the North-Wind,
From the kingdom of Wabasso,
From the land of the White Rabbit.

5

He had stolen the Belt of Wampum
From the neck of Mishe-Mokwa,
From the Great Bear of the mountains, 10
From the terror of the nations,
As he lay asleep and cumbrous
On the summit of the mountains,
Like a rock with mosses on it,
Spotted brown and gray with mosses. 15

Silently he stole upon him,
Till the red nails of the monster
Almost touched him, almost scared him,
Till the hot breath of his nostrils
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis, 20
As he drew the Belt of Wampum
Over the round ears, that heard not,
Over the small eyes, that saw not,
Over the long nose and nostrils,
The black muffle of the nostrils, 25
Out of which the heavy breathing
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis.

Then he swung aloft his war-club,
Shouted loud and long his war-cry,
Smote the mighty Mishe-Mokwa 30
In the middle of the forehead,
Right between the eyes he smote him.

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 23

With the heavy blow bewildered,
Rose the Great Bear of the mountains;
But his knees beneath him trembled, 35
And he whimpered like a woman,
As he reeled and staggered forward,
As he sat upon his haunches;
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,
Standing fearlessly before him, 40
Taunted him in loud derision,
Spake disdainfully in this wise:—

“Hark you, Bear! you are a coward,
And no Brave, as you pretended;
Else you would not cry and whimper 45
Like a miserable woman!
Bear! you know our tribes are hostile,
Long have been at war together;
Now you find that we are strongest,
You go sneaking in the forest, 50
You go hiding in the mountains!
Had you conquered me in battle
Not a groan would I have uttered;
But you, Bear! sit here and whimper,
And disgrace your tribe by crying, 55
Like a wretched Shaugodaya,
Like a cowardly old woman!”

Then again he raised his war-club,
 Smote again the Mishe-Mokwa
 In the middle of his forehead, 60
 Broke his skull, as ice is broken
 When one goes to fish in Winter.
 Thus was slain the Mishe-Mokwa,
 He the Great Bear of the mountains,
 He the terror of the nations. 65

"Honor be to Mudjekeewis!"
 With a shout exclaimed the people,
 "Honor be to Mudjekeewis!
 Henceforth he shall be the West-Wind,
 And hereafter and forever 70
 Shall he hold supreme dominion
 Over all the winds of heaven.
 Call him no more Mudjekeewis,
 Call him Kabeyun, the West-Wind!"

Thus was Mudjekeewis chosen 75
 Father of the Winds of Heaven.
 For himself he kept the West-Wind,
 Gave the others to his children;
 Unto Wabun gave the East-Wind,
 Gave the South to Shawondasee, 80
 And the North-Wind, wild and cruel,
 To the fierce Kabibonokka.

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 25

Young and beautiful was Wabun; .
He it was who brought the morning,
He it was whose silver arrows 85
Chased the dark o'er hill and valley;
He it was whose cheeks were painted
With the brightest streaks of crimson,
And whose voice awoke the village,
Called the deer, and called the hunter. 90

Lonely in the sky was Wabun;
Though the birds sang gayly to him,
Though the wild-flowers of the meadow
Filled the air with odors for him,
Though the forests and the rivers 95
Sang and shouted at his coming,
Still his heart was sad within him,
For he was alone in heaven.

But one morning, gazing earthward,
While the village still was sleeping, 100
And the fog lay on the river,
Like a ghost, that goes at sunrise,
He beheld a maiden walking
All alone upon a meadow,
Gathering water-flags and rushes 105
By a river in the meadow.

Every morning, gazing earthward,

Still the first thing he beheld there
Was her blue eyes looking at him,
Two blue lakes among the rushes. 110
And he loved the lonely maiden,
Who thus waited for his coming;
For they both were solitary,
She on earth and he in heaven.

And he wooed her with caresses, 115
Wooed her with his smile of sunshine,
With his flattering words he wooed her,
With his sighing and his singing,
Gentlest whispers in the branches,
Softest music, sweetest odors, 120
Till he drew her to his bosom,
Folded in his robes of crimson,
Till into a star he changed her,
Trembling still upon his bosom;
And forever in the heavens 125
They are seen together walking,
Waban and the Wabun-Annung,
Wabun and the Star of Morning.

But the fierce Kabibonokka
Had his dwelling among icebergs, 130
In the everlasting snow-drifts,
In the kingdom of Wabasso,

In the land of the White Rabbit.
He it was whose hand in Autumn
Painted all the trees with scarlet, 135
Stained the leaves with red and yellow;
He it was who sent the snow-flakes,
Sifting, hissing through the forest,
Froze the ponds, the lakes, the rivers,
Drove the loon and sea-gull southward, 140
Drove the cormorant and curlew
To their nests of sedge and sea-tang
In the realms of Shawondasee.

Once the fierce Kabibonokka
Issued from his lodge of snow-drifts, 145
From his home among the icebergs,
And his hair, with snow besprinkled,
Streamed behind him like a river,
Like a black and wintry river,
As he howled and hurried southward, 150
Over frozen lakes and moorlands.

There among the reeds and rushes
Found he Shingebis, the diver,
Trailing strings of fish behind him,
O'er the frozen fens and moorlands, 155
Lingering still among the moorlands,
Though his tribe had long departed

To the land of Shawondasee.

Cried the fierce Kabibonokka,
 "Who is this that dares to brave me? 160

Dares to stay in my dominions,
 When the Wawa has departed,
 When the wild-goose has gone southward,
 And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
 Long ago departed southward? 165

I will go into his wigwam,
 I will put his smouldering fire out!"

And at night Kabibonokka
 To the lodge came wild and wailing,
 Heaped the snow in drifts about it, 170
 Shouted down into the smoke-flue,
 Shook the lodge-poles in his fury,
 Flapped the curtain of the door-way.

Shingebis, the diver, feared not,
 Shingebis, the diver, cared not; 175

Four great logs had he for fire-wood,
 One for each moon of the winter,
 And for food the fishes served him.

By his blazing fire he sat there,
 Warm and merry, eating, laughing, 180

Singing, "O Kabibonokka,
 You are but my fellow-mortal!"

Then Kabibonokka entered,
And though Shingebis, the diver,



“I have given you streams to fish in.”
Felt his presence by the coldness,
Felt his icy breath upon him,

Still he did not cease his singing,
Still he did not leave his laughing,
Only turned the log a little,
Only made the fire burn brighter, 190
Made the sparks fly up the smoke-flue.

From Kabibonokka's forehead,
From his snow-besprinkled tresses,
Drops of sweat fell fast and heavy,
Making dints upon the ashes, 195
As along the eaves of lodges,
As from drooping boughs of hemlock,
Drips the melting snow in spring-time,
Making hollows in the snow-drifts.

Till at last he rose defeated, 200
Could not bear the heat and laughter,
Could not bear the merry singing,
But rushed headlong through the door-way,
Stamped upon the crusted snow-drifts,
Stamped upon the lakes and rivers, 205
Made the snow upon them harder,
Made the ice upon them thicker,
Challenged Shingebis, the diver,
To come forth and wrestle with him,
To come forth and wrestle naked 210
On the frozen fens and moorlands.

Forth went Shingebis, the diver,
 Wrestled all night with the North-Wind,
 Wrestled naked on the moorlands
 With the fierce Kabibonokka, 215
 Till his panting breath grew fainter,
 Till his frozen grasp grew feebler,
 Till he reeled and staggered backward,
 And retreated, baffled, beaten,
 To the kingdom of Wabasso, 220
 To the land of the White Rabbit,
 Hearing still the gusty laughter,
 Hearing Shingebis, the diver,
 Singing, "O Kabibonokka,
 You are but my fellow-mortal!" 225
 Shawondasee, fat and lazy,—
 Had his dwelling far to southward,
 In the drowsy, dreamy sunshine,
 In the never-ending Summer.
 He it was who sent the wood-birds, 230
 Sent the Opechee, the robin,
 Sent the bluebird, the Owaissa,
 Sent the Shawshaw, sent the swallow,
 Sent the wild-goose, Wawa, northward,
 Sent the melons and tobacco, 235
 And the grapes in purple clusters.

From his pipe the smoke ascending
Filled the sky with haze and vapor,
Filled the air with dreamy softness,
Gave a twinkle to the water. 240
Touched the rugged hills with smoothness,
Brought the tender Indian Summer
To the melancholy North-land,
In the dreary Moon of Snow-shoes.

Listless, careless Shawondasee! 245
In his life he had one shadow,
In his heart one sorrow had he.
Once, as he was gazing northward,
Far away upon a prairie
He beheld a maiden standing, 250
Saw a tall and slender maiden
All alone upon a prairie;
Brightest green were all her garments,
And her hair was like the sunshine.

Day by day he gazed upon her, 255
Day by day he sighed with passion,
Day by day his heart within him
Grew more hot with love and longing
For the maid with yellow tresses.
But he was too fat and lazy 260
To bestir himself and woo her;

Yes, too indolent and easy
To pursue her and persuade her.
So he only gazed upon her,
Only sat and sighed with passion 265
For the maiden of the prairie.

Till one morning, looking northward,
He beheld her yellow tresses
Changed and covered o'er with whiteness,
Covered as with whitest snow-flakes. 270
"Ah! my brother from the North-land,
From the kingdom of Wabasso,
From the land of the White Rabbit!
You have stolen the maiden from me,
You have laid your hand upon her, 275
You have wooed and won my maiden,
With your stories of the North-land!"

Thus the wretched Shawondasee
Breathed into the air his sorrow;
And the South-Wind o'er the prairie 280
Wandered warm with sighs of passion,
With the sighs of Shawondasee,
Till the air seemed full of snow-flakes,
Full of thistle-down the prairie,
And the maid with hair like sunshine 285
Vanished from his sight forever;

34 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Never more did Shawondasee
See the maid with yellow tresses!

Poor, deluded Shawondasee!

'T was no woman that you gazed at, 290

'T was no maiden that you sighed for,

'T was the prairie dandelion

That through all the dreamy Summer

You had gazed at with such longing,

You had sighed for with such passion, 295

And had puffed away forever,

Blown into the air with sighing.

Ah! deluded Shawondasee!

Thus the Four Winds were divided;

Thus the sons of Mudjekeewis 300

Had their stations in the heavens,

At the corners of the heavens;

For himself the West-Wind only

Kept the mighty Mudjekeewis.



III.

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD.

OWNWARD through
the evening twi-
light,

In the days that are
forgotten,

In the unremembered ages,
From the full moon fell Nokomis,
Fell the beautiful Nokomis, 5
She a wife but not a mother.

She was sporting with her women,
Swinging in a swing of grape-vines,
When her rival, the rejected,
Full of jealousy and hatred, 10
Cut the leafy swing asunder,

36 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Cut in twain the twisted grape-vines,
And Nokomis fell affrighted
Downward through the evening twilight,
On the Muskoday, the meadow, 15
On the prairie full of blossoms.
"See! a star falls!" said the people;
"From the sky a star is falling!"

There among the ferns and mosses,
There among the prairie lilies, 20
On the Muskoday, the meadow,
In the moonlight and the starlight,
Fair Nokomis bore a daughter.
And she called her name Wenonah,
As the first-born of her daughters. 25
And the daughter of Nokomis
Grew up like the prairie lilies,
Grew a tall and slender maiden,
With the beauty of the moonlight,
With the beauty of the starlight. 30

And Nokomis warned her often,
Saying oft, and oft repeating,
"Oh, beware of Mudjekeewis,
Of the West-Wind, Mudjekeewis;
Listen not to what he tells you; 35
Lie not down upon the meadow,

Stoop not down among the lilies,
Lest the West-Wind come and harm you!"

But she heeded not the warning,
Heeded not those words of wisdom. 40

And the West-Wind came at evening,
Walking lightly o'er the prairie,
Whispering to the leaves and blossoms,
Bending low the flowers and grasses,
Found the beautiful Wenonah, 45

Lying there among the lilies,
Wooed her with his words of sweetness,
Wooed her with his soft caresses,
Till she bore a son in sorrow,
Bore a son of love and sorrow, 50

Thus was born my Hiawatha,
Thus was born the child of wonder;
But the daughter of Nokomis,
Hiawatha's gentle mother,
In her anguish died deserted 55
By the West-Wind, false and faithless,
By the heartless Mudjekeewis.

For her daughter, long and loudly
Wailed and wept the sad Nokomis;
"Oh that I were dead!" she murmured, 60
"Oh that I were dead, as thou art!"

Of the stars that shine in heaven;
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses;
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits, 90
Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs
Flaring far away to northward
In the frosty nights of Winter;
Showed the broad white road in heaven,
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows, 95
Running straight across the heavens,
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees, 100
Heard the lapping of the waters,
Sounds of music, words of wonder;
"Minne-wawa!" said the pine-trees.
"Mudway-aushka!" said the water.

Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee, 105
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him: 110
"Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,

Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
 Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
 Light me with your little candle,
 Ere upon my bed I lay me, 115
 Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"

Saw the moon rise from the water
 Rippling, rounding from the water,
 Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
 Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?" 120
 And the good Nokomis answered:
 "Once a warrior, very angry,
 Seized his grandmother, and threw her
 Up into the sky at midnight;
 Right against the moon he threw her; 125
 'T is her body that you see there."

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
 In the eastern sky, the rainbow,
 Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
 And the good Nokomis answered: 130
 "'T is the heaven of flowers you see there;
 All the wild-flowers of the forest,
 All the lilies of the prairie,
 When on earth they fade and perish,
 Blossom in that heaven above us." 135

When he heard the owls at midnight,

Hooting, laughing in the forest,
"What is that?" he cried in terror;
"What is that," he said, "Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered: 140
"That is but the owl and owlet,
Talking in their native language,
Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language, 145
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens." 150

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly, 155
Why the rabbit was so timid,
'Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

Then Iagoo, the great boaster,
He the marvellous story-teller, 160
He the traveller and the talker,

42 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

He the friend of old Nokomis,
Made a bow for Hiawatha;
From a branch of ash he made it,
From an oak-bough made the arrows, 165
Tipped with flint, and winged with feathers,
And the cord he made of deer-skin.

Then he said to Hiawatha:
"Go, my son, into the forest,
Where the red deer herd together, 170
Kill for us a famous roebuck,
Kill for us a deer with antlers!"

Forth into the forest straightway
All alone walked Hiawatha
Proudly, with his bow and arrows; 175
And the birds sang round him, o'er him,
"Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!"
Sang the Opechee, the robin,
Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,
"Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!" 180

Up the oak-tree, close beside him,
Sprang the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
In and out among the branches,
Coughed and chattered from the oak-tree,
Laughed, and said between his laughing, 185
"Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!"

And the rabbit from his pathway
Leaped aside, and at a distance
Sat erect upon his haunches,
Half in fear and half in frolic, 190
Saying to the little hunter,
"Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!"

But he heeded not, nor heard them,
For his thoughts were with the red deer;
On their tracks his eyes were fastened, 195
Leading downward to the river,
To the ford across the river,
And as one in slumber walked he.

Hidden in the alder-bushes,
There he waited till the deer came, 200
Till he saw two antlers lifted,
Saw two eyes look from the thicket,
Saw two nostrils point to windward,
And a deer came down the pathway,
Flecked with leafy light and shadow. 205
And his heart within him fluttered,
Trembled like the leaves above him,
Like the birch-leaf palpitated,
As the deer came down the pathway.

Then, upon one knee uprising, 210
Hiawatha aimed an arrow;

44 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Scarce a twig moved with his motion,
Scarce a leaf was stirred or rustled,
But the wary roebuck started,
Stamped with all his hoofs together, 215
Listened with one foot uplifted,
Leaped as if to meet the arrow;
Ah! the singing, fatal arrow;
Like a wasp it buzzed and stung him!

Dead he lay there in the forest, 220
By the ford across the river;
Beat his timid heart no longer,
But the heart of Hiawatha
Throbbled and shouted and exulted,
As he bore the red deer homeward, 225
And Iagoo and Nokomis
Hailed his coming with applauses.

From the red deer's hide Nokomis
Made a cloak for Hiawatha,
From the red deer's flesh Nokomis 230
Made a banquet in his honor.
All the village came and feasted,
All the guests praised Hiawatha,
Called him Strong-Heart, Soan-ge-taha!
Called him Loon-Heart, Mahn-go-taysee!



"I have given you lands to hunt in."



IV.

HIAWATHA AND MUDJEKEEWIS.

UT of childhood into
manhood
Now had grown my
Hiawatha,
Skilled in all the craft
of hunters,

Learned in all the lore of old men,
In all youthful sports and pastimes, 5
In all manly arts and labors.

Swift of foot was Hiawatha;
He could shoot an arrow from him,
And run forward with such fleetness,
That the arrow fell behind him! 10

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 47

At the doorways of the West-Wind,
At the portals of the Sunset!"

From his lodge went Hiawatha,
Dressed for travel, armed for hunting;
Dressed in deer-skin shirt and leggings, 40
'Richly wrought with quills and wampum
On his head his eagle-feathers,
Round his waist his belt of wampum,
In his hand his bow of ash-wood,
Strung with sinews of the reindeer; 45
In his quiver oaken arrows,
Tipped with jasper, winged with feathers;
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
With his moccasins enchanted.

Warning said the old Nokomis, 50
"Go not forth, O Hiawatha!
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,
To the realms of Mudjekeewis,
Lest he harm you with his magic,
Lest he kill you with his cunning!" 55

But the fearless Hiawatha
Heeded not her woman's warning;
Forth he strode into the forest,
At each stride a mile he measured;
Lurid seemed the sky above him, 60

Lurid seemed the earth beneath him,
Hot and close the air around him,
Filled with smoke and fiery vapors,
As of burning woods and prairies.
For his heart was hot within him, 65
Like a living coal his heart was.

So he journeyed westward, westward,
Left the fleetest deer behind him,
Left the antelope and bison;
Crossed the rushing Esconaba, 70
Crossed the mighty Mississippi,
Passed the Mountains of the Prairie,
Passed the land of Crows and Foxes,
Passed the dwellings of the Blackfeet,
Came unto the Rocky Mountains, 75
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,
Where upon the gusty summits
Sat the ancient Mudjekeewis,
Ruler of the winds of heaven.

Filled with awe was Hiawatha 80
At the aspect of his father.
On the air about him wildly
Tossed and streamed his cloudy tresses,
Gleamed like drifting snow his tresses,
Glared like Ishkoodah, the comet, 85

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 49

Like the star with fiery tresses.

Filled with joy was Mudjekeewis
When he looked on Hiawatha,
Saw his youth rise up before him
In the face of Hiawatha, 90
Saw the beauty of Wenonah
From the grave rise up before him.

"Welcome!" said he, "Hiawatha,
To the kingdom of the West-Wind!
Long have I been waiting for you! 95
Youth is lovely, age is lonely,
Youth is fiery, age is frosty;
You bring back the days departed,
You bring back my youth of passion,
And the beautiful Wenonah!" 100

Many days they talked together,
Questioned, listened, waited, answered;
Much the mighty Mudjekeewis
Boasted of his ancient prowess,
Of his perilous adventures, 105
His indomitable courage,
His invulnerable body.

Patiently sat Hiawatha,
Listening to his father's boasting;
With a smile he sat and listened, 110

50 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Uttered neither threat nor menace,
Neither word nor look betrayed him,
But his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.

Then he said, "O Mudjekeewis, 115
Is there nothing that can harm you?
Nothing that you are afraid of?"
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,
Grand and gracious in his boasting,
Answered, saying, "There is nothing, 120
Nothing but the black rock yonder,
Nothing but the fatal Wawbeek!"

And he looked at Hiawatha
With a wise look and benignant,
With a countenance paternal, 125
Looked with pride upon the beauty
Of his tall and graceful figure,
Saying, "O my Hiawatha!
Is there anything can harm you?
Anything you are afraid of?" 130

But the wary Hiawatha
Paused awhile, as if uncertain,
Held his peace, as if resolving,
And then answered, "There is nothing,
Nothing but the bulrush yonder, 135

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 51

Nothing but the great Apukwa!"

And as Mudjekeewis, rising,
Stretched his hand to pluck the bulrush,
Hiawatha cried in terror,
Cried in well-dissembled terror, 140
"Kago! kago! do not touch it!"
"Ah, kaween!" said Mudjekeewis,
"No indeed, I will not touch it!"

Then they talked of other matters;
First of Hiawatha's brothers, 145
First of Wabun, of the East-Wind,
Of the South-Wind, Shawondasee,
Of the North, Kabibonokka;
Then of Hiawatha's mother,
Of the beautiful Wenonah, 150
Of her birth upon the meadow,
Of her death, as old Nokomis
Had remembered and related.

And he cried, "O Mudjekeewis,
It was you who killed Wenonah, 155
Took her young life and her beauty,
Broke the Lily of the Prairie,
Trampled it beneath your footsteps;
You confess it! you confess it!"
And the mighty Mudjekeewis 160

52 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Tossed his gray hairs to the West-Wind,
Bowed his hoary head in anguish,
With a silent nod assented.



“He was dressed in deer-skin leggings,
Fringed with hedge-hog quills and ermine.”

Then up started Hiawatha,
And with threatening look and gesture 165
Laid his hand upon the black rock,

On the fatal Wawbeek laid it,
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
Rent the jutting crag asunder,
Smote and crushed it into fragments, 170
Hurled them madly at his father,
The remorseful Mudjekeewis,
For his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.

But the ruler of the West-Wind 175
Blew the fragments backward from him,
With the breathing of his nostrils,
With the tempest of his anger,
Blew them back at his assailant;
Seized the bulrush, the Apukwa, 180
Dragged it with its roots and fibres
From the margin of the meadow,
From its ooze, the giant bulrush;
Long and loud laughed Hiawatha!

Then began the deadly conflict, 185
Hand to hand among the mountains;
From his eyry screamed the eagle,
The Keneu, the great war-eagle,
Sat upon the crags around them,
Wheeling flapped his wings above them. 190
Like a tall tree in the tempest

54 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Bent and lashed the giant bulrush;
 And in masses huge and heavy
 Crashing fell the fatal Wawbeek;
 Till the earth shook with the tumult 195
 And confusion of the battle,
 And the air was full of shoutings,
 And the thunder of the mountains,
 Starting, answered, "Baim-wawa!"

 Back retreated Mudjekeewis, 200
 Rushing westward o'er the mountains,
 Stumbling westward down the mountains,
 Three whole days retreated fighting,
 Still pursued by Hiawatha
 To the doorways of the West-Wind, 205
 To the portals of the Sunset,
 To the earth's remotest border,
 Where into the empty spaces
 Sinks the sun, as a flamingo
 Drops into her nest at nightfall, 210
 In the melancholy marshes.

 "Hold!" at length cried Mudjekeewis,
 "Hold, my son, my Hiawatha!
 'T is impossible to kill me,
 For you cannot kill the immortal. 215
 I have put you to this trial,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 55

But to know and prove your courage;
Now receive the prize of valor!

“Go back to your home and people,
Live among them, toil among them, 220
Cleanse the earth from all that harms it,
Clear the fishing-grounds and rivers,
Slay all monsters and magicians,
All the giants, the Wendigoes,
All the serpents, the Kenabeeks, 225
As I slew the Mishe-Mokwa,
Slew the Great Bear of the mountains.

“And at last when Death draws near you,
When the awful eyes of Pauguk
Glare upon you in the darkness, 230
I will share my kingdom with you,
Ruler shall you be thenceforward
Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin,
Of the home-wind, the Keewaydin.”

Thus was fought that famous battle 235
In the dreadful days of Shah-shah,
In the days long since departed,
In the kingdom of the West-Wind.
Still the hunter sees its traces
Scattered far o'er hill and valley; 240
Sees the giant bulrush growing

56 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

By the ponds and water-courses,
Sees the masses of the Wawbeek
Lying still in every valley.

Homeward now went Hiawatha; 245
Pleasant was the landscape round him,
Pleasant was the air above him,
For the bitterness of anger
Had departed wholly from him,
From his brain the thought of vengeance, 250
From his heart the burning fever.

Only once his pace he slackened,
Only once he paused or halted,
Paused to purchase heads of arrows
Of the ancient Arrow-maker, 255
In the land of the Dacotahs,
Where the Falls of Minnehaha
Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,
Laugh and leap into the valley.

There the ancient Arrow-maker 260
Made his arrow-heads of sandstone,
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,
Smoothed and sharpened at the edges,
Hard and polished, keen and costly. 265

With him dwelt his dark-eyed daughter,

Wayward as the Minnehaha,
With her moods of shade and sunshine,
Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate,
Feet as rapid as the river, 270
Tresses flowing like the water,
And as musical a laughter;
And he named her from the river,
From the water-fall he named her,
Minnehaha, Laughing Water. 275

Was it then for heads of arrows,
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,
That my Hiawatha halted
In the land of the Dacotahs? 280

Was it not to see the maiden,
See the face of Laughing Water
Peeping from behind the curtain,
Hear the rustling of her garments
From behind the waving curtain, 285
As one sees the Minnehaha
Gleaming, glancing through the branches,
As one hears the Laughing Water
From behind its screen of branches?

Who shall say what thoughts and visions 290
Fill the fiery brains of young men?

58 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Who shall say what dreams of beauty
Filled the heart of Hiawatha?
All he told to old Nokomis,
When he reached the lodge at sunset, 295
Was the meeting with his father,
Was his fight with Mudjekeewis;
Not a word he said of arrows,
Not a word of Laughing Water!



Blanket Woven by Navajo Woman.



V.

HIAWATHA'S FASTING.

YOU shall hear how Hiawatha
Prayed and fasted in the
forest,
Not for greater skill in hunting,

Not for greater craft in fishing,
Not for triumphs in the battle,
And renown among the warriors,
But for profit of the people,
For advantage of the nations.

First he built a lodge for fasting,

60 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Built a wigwam in the forest, 10
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
In the blithe and pleasant Spring-time,
In the Moon of Leaves he built it,
And, with dreams and visions many,
Seven whole days and nights he fasted. 15

On the first day of his fasting
Through the leafy woods he wandered;
Saw the deer start from the thicket,
Saw the rabbit in his burrow,
Heard the pheasant, Bena, drumming, 20
Heard the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
Rattling in his hoard of acorns,
Saw the pigeon, the Omeme,
Building nests among the pine-trees,
And in flocks the wild goose, Wawa, 25
Flying to the fen-lands northward,
Whirring, wailing far above him.
"Master of Life!" he cried, desponding,
"Must our lives depend on these things?"

On the next day of his fasting 30
By the river's brink he wandered,
Through the Muskoday, the meadow,
Saw the wild rice, Mahnomonee,
Saw the blueberry, Meenahga,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 61

And the strawberry, Odahmin, 35
And the gooseberry, Shahbomin,
And the grape-vine, the Bemahgut,
Trailing o'er the alder-branches,
Filling all the air with fragrance!
"Master of Life!" he cried, desponding, 40
"Must our lives depend on these things?"

On the third day of his fasting
By the lake he sat and pondered,
By the still, transparent water;
Saw the sturgeon, Nahma, leaping, 45
Scattering drops like beads of wampum,
Saw the yellow perch, the Sahwa,
Like a sunbeam in the water,
Saw the pike, the Maskenozha,
And the herring, Okahahwis, 50
And the Shawgashee, the craw-fish!
"Master of Life!" he cried, desponding,
"Must our lives depend on these things?"

On the fourth day of his fasting
In his lodge he lay exhausted; 55
From his couch of leaves and branches
Gazing with half-open eyelids,
Full of shadowy dreams and visions,
On the dizzy, swimming landscape,

On the gleaming of the water,
On the splendor of the sunset.

60

And he saw a youth approaching,
Dressed in garments green and yellow,
Coming through the purple twilight,
Through the splendor of the sunset; 65
Plumes of green bent o'er his forehead,
And his hair was soft and golden.

Standing at the open doorway,
Long he looked at Hiawatha,
Looked with pity and compassion 70
On his wasted form and features,
And, in accents like the sighing
Of the South-Wind in the tree-tops,
Said he, "O my Hiawatha!
All your prayers are heard in heaven, 75
For you pray not like the others;
Not for greater skill in hunting,
Not for greater craft in fishing,
Not for triumph in the battle,
Nor renown among the warriors, 80
But for profit of the people,
For advantage of the nations.

“From the Master of Life descending,
I, the friend of man, Mondamin,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 63

Come to warn you and instruct you, 85

How by struggle and by labor

You shall gain what you have prayed for.

Rise up from your bed of branches,

Rise, O youth, and wrestle with me!"

Faint with famine, Hiawatha 90

Started from his bed of branches,

From the twilight of his wigwam

Forth into the flush of sunset

Came, and wrestled with Mondamin;

At his touch he felt new courage 95

Throbbing in his brain and bosom,

Felt new life and hope and vigor

Run through every nerve and fibre.

'So they wrestled there together

In the glory of the sunset, 100

And the more they strove and struggled,

Stronger still grew Hiawatha;

Till the darkness fell around them,

And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,

From her haunts among the fen-lands, 105

Gave a cry of lamentation,

Gave a scream of pain and famine.

"'T is enough!" then said Mondamin,

Smiling upon Hiawatha,

64 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

"But to-morrow, when the sun sets, 110
I will come again to try you."

And he vanished, and was seen not;
Whether sinking as the rain sinks,
Whether rising as the mists rise,
Hiawatha saw not, knew not, 115
Only saw that he had vanished,
Leaving him alone and fainting,
With the misty lake below him,
And the reeling stars above him.

On the morrow and the next day, 120
When the sun through heaven descending,
Like a red and burning cinder
From the hearth of the Great Spirit,
Fell into the western waters,
Came Mondamin for the trial, 125
For the strife with Hiawatha;
Came as silent as the dew comes,
From the empty air appearing,
Into empty air returning,
Taking shape when earth it touches 130
But invisible to all men
In its coming and its going.

Thrice they wrestled there together
In the glory of the sunset,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 65

Till the darkness fell around them, 135
Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
From her haunts among the fen-lands,
Uttered her loud cry of famine,
And Mondamin paused to listen.

Tall and beautiful he stood there, 140
In his garments green and yellow;
To and fro his plumes above him
Waved and nodded with his breathing,
And the sweat of the encounter
Stood like drops of dew upon him. 145

And he cried, "O Hiawatha!
Bravely have you wrestled with me,
Thrice have wrestled stoutly with me,
And the Master of Life, who sees us,
He will give to you the triumph!" 150

Then he smiled and said: "To-morrow
Is the last day of your conflict,
Is the last day of your fasting.
You will conquer and o'ercome me;
Make a bed for me to lie in, 155
Where the rain may fall upon me,
Where the sun may come and warm me;
Strip these garments, green and yellow,
Strip this nodding plumage from me,

66 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Lay me in the earth and make it 160
Soft and loose and light above me.

 "Let no hand disturb my slumber,
Let no weed nor worm molest me,
Let not Kahgahgee, the raven,
Come to haunt me and molest me, 165
Only come yourself to watch me,
Till I wake, and start, and quicken,
Till I leap into the sunshine."

 And thus saying, he departed;
Peacefully slept Hiawatha, 170
But he heard the Wawonaissa,
Heard the whippoorwill complaining,
Perched upon his lonely wigwam;
Heard the rushing Sebowisha,
Heard the rivulet rippling near him, 175
Talking to the darksome forest;
Heard the sighing of the branches,
As they lifted and subsided
At the passing of the night-wind,
Heard them, as one hears in slumber 180
Far-off murmurs, dreamy whispers:
Peacefully slept Hiawatha.

 On the morrow came Nokomis,
On the seventh day of his fasting,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 67

Came with food for Hiawatha, 185
Came imploring and bewailing,
Lest his hunger should o'ercome him,
Lest his fasting should be fatal.

But he tasted not, and touched not,
Only said to her, "Nokomis, 190
Wait until the sun is setting,
Till the darkness falls around us,
Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
Crying from the desolate marshes,
Tells us that the day is ended." 195

Homeward weeping went Nokomis,
Sorrowing for her Hiawatha,
Fearing lest his strength should fail him,
Lest his fasting should be fatal.
He meanwhile sat weary waiting 200
For the coming of Mondamin,
Till the shadows, pointing eastward,
Lengthened over field and forest,
Till the sun dropped from the heaven,
Floating on the waters westward, 205
As a red leaf in the Autumn
Falls and floats upon the water,
Falls and sinks into its bosom.

And behold! the young Mondamin,

68 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

With his soft and shining tresses, 210
With his garments green and yellow,
With his long and glossy plumage,
Stood and beckoned at the doorway.

And as one in slumber walking,
Pale and haggard, but undaunted, 215
From the wigwam Hiawatha
Came and wrestled with Mondamin.

Round about him spun the landscape,
Sky and forest reeled together,
And his strong heart leaped within him, 220

As the sturgeon leaps and struggles
In a net to break its meshes.

Like a ring of fire around him
Blazed and flared the red horizon,
And a hundred suns seemed looking 225
At the combat of the wrestlers.

Suddenly upon the greensward
All alone stood Hiawatha,
Panting with his wild exertion,
Palpitating with the struggle; 230
And before him, breathless, lifeless,
Lay the youth, with hair dishevelled,
Plumage torn, and garments tattered,
Dead he lay there in the sunset.

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 69

And victorious Hiawatha 235
Made the grave as he commanded,
Stripped the garments from Mondamin,
Stripped his tattered plumage from him,
Laid him in the earth, and made it
Soft and loose and light above him; 240
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
From the melancholy moorlands,
Gave a cry of lamentation,
Gave a cry of pain and anguish!
Homeward then went Hiawatha 245
To the lodge of old Nokomis,
And the seven days of his fasting
Were accomplished and completed.
But the place was not forgotten
Where he wrestled with Mondamin; 250
Nor forgotten nor neglected
Was the grave where lay Mondamin,
Sleeping in the rain and sunshine,
Where his scattered plumes and garments
Faded in the rain and sunshine. 255
Day by day did Hiawatha
Go to wait and watch beside it;
Kept the dark mould soft above it,
Kept it clean from weeds and insects,

70 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Drove away, with scoffs and shoutings, 260
Kahgahgee, the king of ravens.

Till at length a small green feather
From the earth shot slowly upward,
Then another and another,
And before the Summer ended 265
Stood the maize in all its beauty,
With its shining robes about it,
And its long, soft, yellow tresses;
And in rapture Hiawatha
Cried aloud, "It is Mondamin! 270
Yes, the friend of man, Mondamin!"
Then he called to old Nokomis
And Iagoo, the great boaster,
Showed them where the maize was growing,
Told them of his wondrous vision, 275
Of his wrestling and his triumph,
Of this new gift to the nations,
Which should be their food forever.

And still later, when the Autumn
Changed the long, green leaves to yellow, 280
And the soft and juicy kernels
Grew like wampum hard and yellow,
Then the ripened ears he gathered,
Stripped the withered husks from off them,

As he once had stripped the wrestler, 285
Gave the first Feast of Mondamin,
And made known unto the people
This new gift of the Great Spirit.



"Danced the beggar's dance to please them."



"In the hoof-prints of the Bison."

VI.

HIAWATHA'S FRIENDS.



WO good friends had
 Hiawatha,
 Singled out from all the
 others,
 Bound to him in closest

union,

And to whom he gave the right hand
 Of his heart, in joy and sorrow; 5
 Chibiabos, the musician,
 And the very strong man, Kwasind.

Straight between them ran the pathway,
 Never grew the grass upon it;
 Singing birds, that utter falsehoods, 10
 Story-tellers, mischief-makers,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 73

Found no eager ear to listen,
Could not breed ill-will between them,
For they kept each other's counsel,
Spake with naked hearts together, 15
Pondering much and much contriving
How the tribes of men might prosper.

Most beloved by Hiawatha
Was the gentle Chibiabos,
He the best of all musicians, 20
He the sweetest of all singers.
Beautiful and childlike was he,
Brave as man is, soft as woman,
Pliant as a wand of willow,
Stately as a deer with antlers. 25

When he sang, the village listened;
All the warriors gathered round him,
All the women came to hear him;
Now he stirred their souls to passion,
Now he melted them to pity. 30

From the hollow reeds he fashioned
Flutes so musical and mellow,
That the brook, the Sebowisha,
Ceased to murmur in the woodland,
That the wood-birds ceased from singing, 35
And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,

74 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Ceased his chatter in the oak-tree,
And the rabbit, the Wabasso,
Sat upright to look and listen.

Yes, the brook, the Sebowisha, 40
Pausing, said, "O Chibiabos,
Teach my waves to flow in music,
Softly as your words in singing!"

Yes, the bluebird, the Owaissa,
Envious, said, "O Chibiabos, 45
Teach me tones as wild and wayward,
Teach me songs as full of frenzy!"

Yes, the Opechee, the robin,
Joyous, said, "O Chibiabos,
Teach me tones as sweet and tender, 50
Teach me songs as full of gladness!"

And the whippoorwill, Wawonaissa,
Sobbing, said, "O Chibiabos,
Teach me tones as melancholy,
Teach me songs as full of sadness!" 55

All the many sounds of nature
Borrowed sweetness from his singing;
All the hearts of men were softened
By the pathos of his music;
For he sang of peace and freedom, 60
Sang of beauty, love, and longing;

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 75

Sang of death, and life undying
In the Islands of the Blessed,
In the kingdom of Ponemah,
In the land of the Hereafter. 65

Very dear to Hiawatha
Was the gentle Chibiabos,
He the best of all musicians,
He the sweetest of all singers;
For his gentleness he loved him, 70
And the magic of his singing.



Dear, too, unto Hiawatha
Was the very strong man, Kwasind,
He the strongest of all mortals,
He the mightiest among many; 75
For his very strength he loved him,
For his strength allied to goodness.

Idle in his youth was Kwasind,
Very listless, dull, and dreamy,
Never played with other children, 80
Never fished and never hunted,
Not like other children was he;
But they saw that much he fasted,
Much his Manito entreated,

Much besought his Guardian Spirit. 85

“Lazy Kwasind!” said his mother,

“In my work you never help me!

In the Summer you are roaming

Idly in the fields and forests;

In the Winter you are cowering 90

O’er the firebrands in the wigwam!

In the coldest days of Winter

I must break the ice for fishing;

With my nets you never help me!

At the door my nets are hanging, 95

Dripping, freezing with the water;

Go and wring them, Yenadizze!

Go and dry them in the sunshine!”

Slowly, from the ashes, Kwasind

Rose, but made no angry answer; 100

From the lodge went forth in silence,

Took the nets, that hung together,

Dripping, freezing at the doorway;

Like a wisp of straw he wrung them,

Like a wisp of straw he broke them, 105

Could not wring them without breaking,

Such the strength was in his fingers.

“Lazy Kwasind!” said his father,

“In the hunt you never help me;

Every bow you touch is broken, 110
Snapped asunder every arrow;
Yet come with me to the forest,
You shall bring the hunting homeward."

Down a narrow pass they wandered,
Where a brooklet led them onward, 115
Where the trail of deer and bison
Marked the soft mud on the margin,
Till they found all further passage
Shut against them, barred securely
By the trunks of trees uprooted, 120
Lying lengthwise, lying crosswise,
And forbidding further passage.

"We must go back," said the old man,
"O'er these logs we cannot clamber;
Not a woodchuck could get through them, 125
Not a squirrel clamber o'er them!"
And straightway his pipe he lighted,
And sat down to smoke and ponder.
But before his pipe was finished,
Lo! the path was cleared before him: 130
All the trunks had Kwasind lifted,
To the right hand, to the left hand,
Shot the pine-trees swift as arrows,
Hurled the cedars light as lances.

78 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

“Lazy Kwasind!” said the young men, 135
As they sported in the meadow;
“Why standing idly looking at us,
Leaning on the rock behind you?
Come and wrestle with the others,
Let us pitch the quoit together!” 140

Lazy Kwasind made no answer,
To their challenge made no answer,
Only rose, and, slowly turning,
Seized the huge rock in his fingers,
Tore it from its deep foundation, 145
Poised it in the air a moment,
Pitched it sheer into the river,
Sheer into the swift Pauwating,
Where it still is seen in Summer.

Once as down that foaming river, 150
Down the rapids of Pauwating,
Kwasind sailed with his companions,
In the stream he saw a beaver,
Saw Ahmeek, the King of Beavers,
Struggling with the rushing currents, 155
Rising, sinking in the water.

Without speaking, without pausing,
Kwasind leaped into the river,
Plunged beneath the bubbling surface,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 79

Through the whirlpools chased the beaver,
ver, 160

Followed him among the islands,
Stayed so long beneath the water,
That his terrified companions
Cried, "Alas! good-by to Kwasind!
We shall never more see Kwasind!" 165

But he reappeared triumphant,
And upon his shining shoulders
Brought the beaver, dead and dripping,
Brought the King of all the Beavers.

And these two, as I have told you, 170
Were the friends of Hiawatha,

Chibiabos, the musician,
And the very strong man, Kwasind.
Long they lived in peace together,
Spake with naked hearts together, 175
Pondering much and much contriving
How the tribes of men might prosper.



Beads of Wampum, Shells and Turquoise.



VII.

HIAWATHA'S SAILING.

IVE me of your bark,
 O Birch-Tree!
 Of your yellow bark,
 O Birch-Tree!

Growing by the rushing river,
 Tall and stately in the valley!
 I a light canoe will build me,
 Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing,
 That shall float upon the river,
 Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,

5

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. { 1

Like a yellow water-lily!

 "Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree! 10

Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,

For the summer-time is coming,

And the sun is warm in heaven,

And you need no white-skin wrapper!"

 Thus aloud cried Hiawatha 15

In the solitary forest,

By the rushing Taquamenaw,

When the birds were singing gayly,

In the Moon of Leaves were singing,

And the sun, from sleep awaking, 20

Started up and said, "Behold me!

Gheezis, the great Sun, behold me!"

 And the tree with all its branches

Rustled in the breeze of morning,

Saying, with a sigh of patience, 25

"Take my cloak, O Hiawatha!"

 With his knife the tree he girdled;

Just beneath its lowest branches,

Just above the roots, he cut it,

Till the sap came oozing outward; 30

Down the trunk, from top to bottom,

Sheer he cleft the bark asunder,

With a wooden wedge he raised it,

82 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Stripped it from the trunk unbroken.

“Give me of your boughs, O Cedar! 35
Of your strong and pliant branches,
My canoe to make more steady,
Make more strong and firm beneath me!”

Through the summit of the Cedar
Went a sound, a cry of horror, 40
Went a murmur of resistance;
But it whispered, bending downward,
“Take my boughs, O Hiawatha!”

Down he hewed the boughs of cedar,
Shaped them straightway to a framework, 45
Like two bows he formed and shaped them,
Like two bended bows together.

“Give me of your roots, O Tamarack!
Of your fibrous roots, O Larch-Tree!
My canoe to bind together, 50
So to bind the ends together
That the water may not enter,
That the river may not wet me!”

And the Larch, with all its fibres,
Shivered in the air of morning, 55
Touched his forehead with its tassels,
Said, with one long sigh of sorrow,
“Take them all, O Hiawatha!”

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 83

From the earth he tore the fibres,
Tore the tough roots of the Larch-Tree, 60
Closely sewed the bark together,
Bound it closely to the framework.

“Give me of your balm, O Fir-Tree!
Of your balsam and your resin,
So to close the seams together 65
That the water may not enter,
That the river may not wet me!”

And the Fir-Tree, tall and sombre,
Sobbed through all its robes of darkness,
Rattled like a shore with pebbles, 70
Answered wailing, answered weeping,
“Take my balm, O Hiawatha!”

And he took the tears of balsam,
Took the resin of the Fir-Tree,
Smeared therewith each seam and fissure, 75
Made each crevice safe from water.

“Give me of your quills, O Hedgehog!
All your quills, O Kagh, the Hedgehog!
I will make a necklace of them,
Make a girdle for my beauty, 80
And two stars to deck her bosom!”

From a hollow tree the Hedgehog
With his sleepy eyes looked at him,

84 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Shot his shining quills, like arrows,
Saying, with a drowsy murmur, 85
Through the tangle of his whiskers,
"Take my quills, O Hiawatha!"

From the ground the quills he gathered,
All the little shining arrows,
Stained them red and blue and yellow, 90
With the juice of roots and berries;
Into his canoe he wrought them,
Round its waist a shining girdle,
Round its bows a gleaming necklace,
On its breast two stars resplendent. 95



Thus the Birch Canoe was builded
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest;
And the forest's life was in it,
All its mystery and its magic, 100
All the lightness of the birch-tree,
All the toughness of the cedar,
All the larch's supple sinews;
And it floated on the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn, 105
Like a yellow water-lily.

Paddles none had Hiawatha,
Paddles none he had or needed,
For his thoughts as paddles served him,
And his wishes served to guide him; 110
Swift or slow at will he glided,
Veered to right or left at pleasure.

Then he called aloud to Kwasind,
To his friend, the strong man, Kwasind,
Saying, "Help me clear this river 115
Of its sunken logs and sand-bars."

Straight into the river Kwasind
Plunged as if he were an otter,
Dived as if he were a beaver,
Stood up to his waist in water, 120
To his arm-pits in the river,
Swam and shouted in the river,
Tugged at sunken logs and branches,
With his hands he scooped the sand-bars,
With his feet the ooze and tangle. 125

And thus sailed my Hiawatha
Down the rushing Taquamenaw,
Sailed through all its bends and windings,
Sailed through all its deeps and shallows,
While his friend, the strong man, Kwa-
sind, 130

86 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Swam the deeps, the shallows waded.

Up and down the river went they,
In and out among its islands,
Cleared its bed of root and sand-bar,
Dragged the dead trees from its channel, 135
Made its passage safe and certain,
Made a pathway for the people,
From its springs among the mountains,
To the waters of Pauwating,
To the bay of Taquamenaw. 140



Front Head of Ojibway Fish-Spear.



Shell and Pearl Beads of the Iroquois.



VIII.

HIAWATHA'S

FISHING.

ORTH upon the Git-
che Gumees,
On the shining Big-
Sea-Water,
With his fishing-line
of cedar,

Of the twisted bark of cedar,
Forth to catch the sturgeon Nahma,

5

Mishe-Nahma, King of Fishes,
In his birch canoe exulting
All alone went Hiawatha.

Through the clear, transparent water
He could see the fishes swimming 10
Far down in the depths below him;
See the yellow perch, the Sahwa,
Like a sunbeam in the water,
See the Shawgashee, the craw-fish,
Like a spider on the bottom, 15
On the white and sandy bottom.

At the stern sat Hiawatha,
With his fishing-line of cedar;
In his plumes the breeze of morning
Played as in the hemlock branches; 20
On the bows, with tail erected,
Sat the squirrel, Adjidaumo;
In his fur the breeze of morning
Played as in the prairie grasses.

On the white sand of the bottom 25
Lay the monster Mishe-Nahma,
Lay the sturgeon, King of Fishes;
Through his gills he breathed the water,
With his fins he fanned and winnowed,
With his tail he swept the sand-floor. 30

There he lay in all his armor;
On each side a shield to guard him,
Plates of bone upon his forehead,
Down his sides and back and shoulders
Plates of bone with spines projecting, 35
Painted was he with his war-paints,
Stripes of yellow, red, and azure,
Spots of brown and spots of sable;
And he lay there on the bottom,
Fanning with his fins of purple, 40
As above him Hiawatha
In his birch canoe came sailing,
With his fishing-line of cedar.
"Take my bait!" cried Hiawatha,
Down into the depths beneath him, 45
"Take my bait, O Sturgeon, Nahma!
Come up from below the water,
Let us see which is the stronger!"
And he dropped his line of cedar
Through the clear, transparent water, 50
Waited vainly for an answer,
Long sat waiting for an answer,
And repeating loud and louder,
"Take my bait, O King of Fishes!"
Quiet lay the sturgeon, Nahma, 55

90 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Fanning slowly in the water,
Looking up at Hiawatha,
Listening to his call and clamor,
His unnecessary tumult,
Till he wearied of the shouting; 60
And he said to the Kenozha,
To the pike, the Maskenozha,
"Take the bait of this rude fellow,
Break the line of Hiawatha!"

 In his fingers Hiawatha 65
Felt the loose line jerk and tighten;
As he drew it in, it tugged so,
That the birch canoe stood endwise,
Like a birch log in the water,
With the squirrel, Adjidaumo, 70
Perched and frisking on the summit.

 Full of scorn was Hiawatha
When he saw the fish rise upward,
Saw the pike, the Maskenozha,
Coming nearer, nearer to him, 75
And he shouted through the water,
"Esa! esa! shame upon you!
You are but the pike, Kenozha,
You are not the fish I wanted,
You are not the King of Fishes!" 80

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

91

Reeling downward to the bottom
Sank the pike in great confusion,
And the mighty sturgeon, Nahma,
Said to Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
"Take the bait of this great boaster,
Break the line of Hiawatha!" 85

Slowly upward, wavering, gleaming,
Like a white moon in the water;
Rose the Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
Seized the line of Hiawatha, 90
Swung with all his weight upon it,
Made a whirlpool in the water,
Whirled the birch canoe in circles,
Round and round in gurgling eddies,
Till the circles in the water 95
Reached the far-off sandy beaches,
Till the water-flags and rushes
Nodded on the distant margins.

But when Hiawatha saw him
Slowly rising through the water, 100
Lifting his great disc of whiteness,
Loud he shouted in derision,
"Esa! esa! shame upon you!
You are Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
You are not the fish I wanted, 105

92 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

You are not the King of Fishes!"

Wavering downward, white and ghastly,
Sank the Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
And again the sturgeon, Nahma,
Heard the shout of Hiawatha, 110
Heard his challenge of defiance,
The unnecessary tumult,
Ringing far across the water.

From the white sand of the bottom
Up he rose with angry gesture, 115
Quivering in each nerve and fibre,
Clashing all his plates of armor,
Gleaming bright with all his war-paint;
In his wrath he darted upward,
Flashing leaped into the sunshine, 120
Opened his great jaws, and swallowed
Both canoe and Hiawatha.

Down into that darksome cavern
Plunged the headlong Hiawatha,
As a log on some black river 125
Shoots and plunges down the rapids,
Found himself in utter darkness,
Groped around in helpless wonder,
Till he felt a great heart beating,
Throbbing in that utter darkness. 130

And he smote it in his anger,
 With his fist, the heart of Nahma,
 Felt the mighty King of Fishes
 Shudder through each nerve and fibre,
 Heard the water gurgle round him 135
 As he leaped and staggered through it,
 Sick at heart, and faint and weary.

Crosswise then did Hiawatha
 Drag his birch-canoe for safety,
 Lest from out the jaws of Nahma, 140
 In the turmoil and confusion,
 Forth he might be hurled and perish.
 And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
 Frisked and chattered very gayly,
 Toiled and tugged with Hiawatha 145
 Till the labor was completed.

Then said Hiawatha to him,
 "O my little friend, the squirrel,
 Bravely have you toiled to help me;
 Take the thanks of Hiawatha, 150
 And the name which now he gives you;
 For hereafter and forever
 Boys shall call you Adjidaumo,
 Tail-in-air the boys shall call you!"

And again the sturgeon, Nahma, 155

94 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Gasped and quivered in the water,
Then was still, and drifted landward
Till he grated on the pebbles,
Till the listening Hiawatha
Heard him grate upon the margin, 160
Felt him strand upon the pebbles,
Knew that Nahma, King of Fishes,
Lay there dead upon the margin.

Then he heard a clang and flapping,
As of many wings assembling, 165
Heard a screaming and confusion,
As of birds of prey contending,
Saw a gleam of light above him,
Shining through the ribs of Nahma,
Saw the glittering eyes of sea-gulls, 170
Of Kayoshk, the sea-gulls, peering,
Gazing at him through the opening,
Heard them saying to each other,
“’T is our brother, Hiawatha!”

And he shouted from below them, 175
Cried exulting from the caverns:
“O ye sea-gulls! O my brothers!
I have slain the sturgeon, Nahma;
Make the rifts a little larger,
With your claws the openings widen, 180

Set me free from this dark prison,
 And henceforward and forever
 Men shall speak of your achievements,
 Calling you Kayoshk, the sea-gulls,
 Yes, Kayoshk, the Noble Scratchers!" 185

And the wild and clamorous sea-gulls
 Toiled with beak and claws together,
 Made the rifts and openings wider
 In the mighty ribs of Nahma,
 And from peril and from prison, 190
 From the body of the sturgeon,
 From the peril of the water,
 They released my Hiawatha.

He was standing near his wigwam,
 On the margin of the water, 195
 And he called to old Nokomis,
 Called and beckoned to Nokomis,
 Pointed to the sturgeon, Nahma,
 Lying lifeless on the pebbles,
 With the sea-gulls feeding on him. 200

"I have slain the Mishe-Nahma,
 Slain the King of Fishes!" said he;
 "Look! the sea-gulls feed upon him,
 Yes, my friends Kayoshk, the sea-gulls;
 Drive them not away, Nokomis, 205

They have saved me from great peril
In the body of the sturgeon,
Wait until their meal is ended,
Till their craws are full with feasting,
Till they homeward fly, at sunset, 210
To their nests among the marshes;
Then bring all your pots and kettles,
And make oil for us in Winter."

And she waited till the sun set,
Till the pallid moon, the Night-sun, 215
Rose above the tranquil water,
Till Kayoshk, the sated sea-gulls,
From their banquet rose with clamor,
And across the fiery sunset
Winged their way to far-off islands, 220
To their nests among the rushes.

To his sleep went Hiawatha,
And Nokomis to her labor,
Toiling patient in the moonlight,
Till the sun and moon changed places, 225
Till the sky was red with sunrise,
And Kayoshk, the hungry sea-gulls,
Came back from the reedy islands,
Clamorous for their morning banquet.

Three whole days and nights alternate 230

Old Nokomis and the sea-gulls
Stripped the oily flesh of Nahma,
Till the waves washed through the rib-bones,
Till the sea-gulls came no longer,
And upon the sands lay nothing
But the skeleton of Nahma.

235



Stone Axes of the Blackfoot Indians.



Sioux Indians, in Wolf-Skins, Hunting Buffalo.



IX.

HIAWATHA AND THE PEARL-FEATHER.

N the shores of Gitche
Gumee,
Of the shining Big-Sea-
Water,

Stood Nokomis, the old woman,
Pointing with her finger westward,
O'er the water pointing westward,
To the purple clouds of sunset.

5

Fiercely the red sun descending
Burned his way along the heavens,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 99

Set the sky on fire behind him,
As war-parties, when retreating, 10
Burn the prairies on their war-trail;
And the moon, the Night-sun, eastward,
Suddenly starting from his ambush,
Followed fast those bloody footprints,
Followed in that fiery war-trail, 15
With its glare upon his features.

And Nokomis, the old woman,
Pointing with her finger westward,
Spake these words to Hiawatha:
"Yonder dwells the great Pearl-Feather, 20
Megissogwon, the Magician,
Manito of Wealth and Wampum,
Guarded by his fiery serpents,
Guarded by the black pitch-water.
You can see his fiery serpents, 25
The Kenabeek, the great serpents,
Coiling, playing in the water;
You can see the black pitch-water
Stretching far away beyond them,
To the purple clouds of sunset! 30
"He it was who slew my father,
By his wicked wiles and cunning,
When he from the moon descended,

When he came on earth to seek me.
He, the mightiest of Magicians, 35
Sends the fever from the marshes,
Sends the pestilential vapors,
Sends the poisonous exhalations,
Sends the white fog from the fen-lands,
Sends disease and death among us! 40

"Take your bow, O Hiawatha,
 Take your arrows, jasper-headed,
 Take your war-club, Puggawaugun,
 And your mittens, Minjekahwun,
 And your birch canoe for sailing, 45
 And the oil of Mishe-Nahma,
 So to smear its sides, that swiftly
 You may pass the black pitch-water;
 Slay this merciless magician,
 Save the people from the fever 50
 That he breathes across the fen-lands,
 And avenge my father's murder!"

Straightway then my Hiawatha
Armed himself with all his war-gear,
Launched his birch canoe for sailing; 55
With his palm its sides he patted
Said with glee, "Cheemaun, my darling,
O my Birch-canoe! leap forward,

Where you see the fiery serpents,
Where you see the black pitch-water!" 60

Forward leaped Cheemaun exulting,
And the Noble Hiawatha
Sang his war-song wild and woful,
And above him the war-eagle,
The Keneu, the great war-eagle, 65
Master of all fowls with feathers,
Screamed and hurtled through the heavens.

Soon he reached the fiery serpents,
The Kenabeek, the great serpents,
Lying huge upon the water, 70
Sparkling, rippling in the water,
Lying coiled across the passage,
With their blazing crests uplifted,
Breathing fiery fogs and vapors,
So that none could pass beyond them. 75

But the fearless Hiawatha
Cried aloud, and spake in this wise:
"Let me pass my way, Kenabeek,
Let me go upon my journey!"
And they answered, hissing fiercely, 80
With their fiery breath made answer:
"Back, go back! O Shaugodaya!
Back to old Nokomis, Faint-heart!"

Then the angry Hiawatha
 Raised his mighty bow of ash-tree, 85
 Seized his arrows, jasper-headed,
 Shot them fast among the serpents;
 Every twanging of the bow-string
 Was a war-cry and a death-cry,
 Every whizzing of an arrow 90
 Was a death-song of Kenabeek.

Weltering in the bloody water,
 Dead lay all the fiery serpents,
 And among them Hiawatha
 Harmless sailed, and cried exulting: 95
 "Onward, O Cheemaun, my darling!
 Onward to the black pitch-water!"

Then he took the oil of Nahma,
 And the bows and sides anointed,
 Smear'd them well with oil, that swiftly 100
 He might pass the black pitch-water.

All night long he sailed upon it,
 Sailed upon that sluggish water,
 Covered with its mould of ages,
 Black with rotting water-rushes, 105
 Rank with flags and leaves of lilies,
 Stagnant, lifeless, dreary, dismal,
 Lighted by the shimmering moonlight,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 103

And by will-o'-the-wisps illumined,
Fires by ghosts of dead men kindled, 110
In their weary night-encampments.

All the air was white with moonlight,
All the water black with shadow,
And around him the Suggema,
The mosquito, sang his war-song, 115
And the fire-flies, Wah-wah-taysee,
Waved their torches to mislead him;
And the bull-frog, the Dahinda,
Thrust his head into the moonlight,
Fixed his yellow eyes upon him, 120
Sobbed and sank beneath the surface;
And anon a thousand whistles,
Answered over all the fen-lands,
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
Far off on the reedy margin, 125
Heralded the hero's coming.

Westward thus fared Hiawatha,
Toward the realm of Megissogwon,
Toward the land of the Pearl-Feather,
Till the level moon stared at him, 130
In his face stared pale and haggard,
Till the sun was hot behind him,
Till it burned upon his shoulders,

104 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

And before him on the upland
He could see the Shining Wigwam 135
Of the Manito of Wampum,
Of the mightiest of Magicians.

Then once more Cheemaun he patted,
To his birch-canoe said, "Onward!"
And it stirred in all its fibres, 140
And with one great bound of triumph
Leaped across the water-lilies,
Leaped through tangled flags and rushes,
And upon the beach beyond them
Dry-shod landed Hiawatha. 145

Straight he took his bow of ash-tree,
One end on the sand he rested,
With his knee he pressed the middle,
Stretched the faithful bow-string tighter,
Took an arrow, jasper-headed, 150
Shot it at the Shining Wigwam,
Sent it singing as a herald,
As a bearer of his message,
Of his challenge loud and lofty:
"Come forth from your lodge, Pearl-Feath-
er! 155

Hiawatha waits your coming!"
Straightway from the Shining Wigwam

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 105

Came the mighty Megissogwon,
Tall of stature, broad of shoulder,
Dark and terrible in aspect, 160
Clad from head to foot in wampum,
Armed with all his warlike weapons,
Painted like the sky of morning,
Streaked with crimson, blue and yellow,
Crested with great eagle-feathers, 165
Streaming upward, streaming outward.

“Well I know you, Hiawatha!”
Cried he in a voice of thunder,
In a tone of loud derision.
“Hasten back, O Shaugodaya! 170
Hasten back among the women,
Back to old Nokomis, Faint-heart!
I will slay you as you stand there,
As of old I slew her father!”

But my Hiawatha answered, 175
Nothing daunted, fearing nothing:
“Big words do not smite like war-clubs,
Boastful breath is not a bow-string,
Taunts are not as sharp as arrows,
Deeds are better things than words are, 180
Actions mightier than boastings!”

Then began the greatest battle

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

That the sun had ever looked on,
That the war-birds ever witnessed.
All a Summer's day it lasted, 185
From the sunrise to the sunset;
For the shafts of Hiawatha
Harmless hit the shirt of wampum,
Harmless fell the blows he dealt it
With his mittens, Minjekahwun, 190
Harmless fell the heavy war-club;
It could dash the rocks asunder,
But it could not break the meshes
Of that magic shirt of wampum.

Till at sunset Hiawatha,
Leaning on his bow of ash-tree,
Wounded, weary, and desponding,
With his mighty war-club broken,
With his mittens torn and tattered,
And three useless arrows only,
Paused to rest beneath a pine-tree,
From whose branches trailed the mosses,
And whose trunk was coated over
With the Dead-man's Moccasin-leather,
With the fungus white and yellow.

Suddenly from the boughs above him
Sang the Mama, the woodpecker:

"Aim your arrows, Hiawatha,
At the head of Megissogwon,
Strike the tuft of hair upon it, 210
At their roots the long black tresses;
There alone can he be wounded!"

Winged with feathers, tipped with jasper,
Swift flew Hiawatha's arrow,



"Plunging like a wounded bison."

Just as Megissogwon, stooping, 215
Raised a heavy stone to throw it.
Full upon the crown it struck him,
At the roots of his long tresses,
And he reeled and staggered forward,
Plunging like a wounded bison, 220
Yes, like Pezhekee, the bison,
When the snow is on the prairie.

108 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Swifter flew the second arrow,
In the pathway of the other,
Piercing deeper than the other, 225
Wounding sorer than the other;
And the knees of Megissogwon
Shook like windy reeds beneath him,
Bent and trembled like the rushes.

But the third and latest arrow 230
Swiftest flew, and wounded sorest,
And the mighty Megissogwon
Saw the fiery eyes of Pauguk,
Saw the eyes of Death glare at him,
Heard his voice call in the darkness; 235
At the feet of Hiawatha
Lifeless lay the great Pearl-Feather,
Lay the mightiest of Magicians.

Then the grateful Hiawatha
Called the Mama, the woodpecker, 240
From his perch among the branches
Of the melancholy pine-tree,
And, in honor of his service,
Stained with blood the tuft of feathers
On the little head of Mama; 245
Even to this day he wears it,
Wears the tuft of crimson feathers

As a symbol of his service.

Then he stripped the shirt of wampum
From the back of Megissogwon, 250

As a trophy of the battle,

As a signal of his conquest.

On the shore he left the body,
Half on land and half in water,
In the sand his feet were buried, 255

And his face was in the water.

And above him, wheeled and clamored

The Keneu, the great war-eagle,
Sailing round in narrower circles,
Hovering nearer, nearer, nearer. 260

From the wigwam Hiawatha
Bore the wealth of Megissogwon,
All his wealth of skins and wampum,
Furs of bison and of beaver,
Furs of sable and of ermine, 265

Wampum belts and strings and pouches,
Quivers wrought with beads of wampum,
Filled with arrows, silver-headed.

Homeward then he sailed exulting,
Homeward through the black pitch-water, 270
Homeward through the weltering serpents,
With the trophies of the battle,

110 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

With a shout and song of triumph.

On the shore stood old Nokomis,
On the shore stood Chibiabos, 275

And the very strong man, Kwasind,
Waiting for the hero's coming,
Listening to his song of triumph.

And the people of the village
Welcomed him with songs and dances, 280

Made a joyous feast, and shouted:

"Honor be to Hiawatha!

He has slain the great Pearl-Feather,
Slain the mightiest of Magicians,
Him who sent the fiery fever, 285

Sent the white fog from the fen-lands,
Sent disease and death among us!"

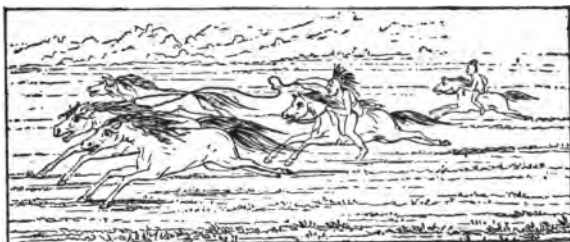
Ever dear to Hiawatha
Was the memory of Mama!

And in token of his friendship, 290
As a mark of his remembrance,

He adorned and decked his pipe-stem
With the crimson tuft of feathers,
With the blood-red crest of Mama.

But the wealth of Megissogwon, 295
All the trophies of the battle,

He divided with his people,
Shared it equally among them.



Apache Indians Lassoing Wild Horses.



X.

HIAWATHA'S

WOOING.

S unto the bow the cord
is,
So unto the man is wo-
man,
Though she bends him,
she obeys him,

Though she draws him, yet she follows,
Useless each without the other!"

5

Thus the youthful Hiawatha
Said within himself and pondered,
Much perplexed by various feelings,

Listless, longing, hoping, fearing,
 Dreaming still of Minnehaha, 10
 Of the lovely Laughing Water,
 In the land of the Dacotahs.

"Wed a maiden of your people,"
 Warning said the old Nokomis;
 "Go not eastward, go not westward, 15
 For a stranger, whom we know not!
 Like a fire upon the hearth-stone
 Is a neighbor's homely daughter,
 Like the starlight or the moonlight
 Is the handsomest of strangers!" 20

Thus dissuading spake Nokomis,
 And my Hiawatha answered
 Only this: "Dear old Nokomis,
 Very pleasant is the firelight,
 But I like the starlight better, 25
 Better do I like the moonlight!"

Gravely then said old Nokomis:
 "Bring not here an idle maiden,
 Bring not here a useless woman,
 Hands unskilful, feet unwilling; 30
 Bring a wife with nimble fingers,
 Heart and hand that move together,
 Feet that run on willing errands!"

Smiling answered Hiawatha:
 "In the land of the Dacotahs 35
 Lives the Arrow-maker's daughter,
 Minnehaha, Laughing Water,
 Handsomest of all the women.
 I will bring her to your wigwam,
 She shall run upon your errands, 40
 Be your starlight, moonlight, firelight,
 Be the sunlight of my people!"

Still dissuading said Nokomis:
 "Bring not to my lodge a stranger
 From the land of the Dacotahs! 45
 Very fierce are the Dacotahs,
 Often is there war between us,
 There are feuds yet unforgotten,
 Wounds that ache and still may open!"

Laughing answered Hiawatha: 50
 "For that reason, if no other,
 Would I wed the fair Dacotah,
 That our tribes might be united,
 That old feuds might be forgotten,
 And old wounds be healed forever!" 55



Thus departed Hiawatha

114 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

To the land of the Dacotahs,
To the land of handsome women;
Striding over moor and meadow,
Through interminable forests, 60
Through uninterrupted silence.

With his moccasins of magic,
At each stride a mile he measured;
Yet the way seemed long before him,
And his heart outrun his footsteps; 65
And he journeyed without resting,
Till he heard the cataract's thunder,
Heard the Falls of Minnehaha
Calling to him through the silence.
"Pleasant is the sound!" he murmured, 70
"Pleasant is the voice that calls me!"

On the outskirts of the forest,
'Twixt the shadow and the sunshine,
Herds of fallow deer were feeding,
But they saw not Hiawatha; 75
To his bow he whispered, "Fail not!"
To his arrow whispered, "Swerve not!"
Sent it singing on its errand,
To the red heart of the roebuck;
Threw the deer across his shoulder, 80
And sped forward without pausing.

At the doorway of his wigwam
 Sat the ancient Arrow-maker,
 In the land of the Dacotahs,
 Making arrow-heads of jasper, 85
 Arrow-heads of chalcedony.

At his side in all her beauty,
 Sat the lovely Minnehaha,
 Sat his daughter, Laughing Water,
 Plaiting mats of flags and rushes; 90
 Of the past the old man's thoughts were,
 And the maiden's of the future.

He was thinking, as he sat there,
 Of the days when with such arrows
 He had struck the deer and bison, 95
 On the Muskoday, the meadow;
 Shot the wild goose, flying southward,
 On the wing, the clamorous Wawa;
 Thinking of the great war-parties,
 How they came to buy his arrows, 100
 Could not fight without his arrows.

Ah, no more such noble warriors
 Could be found on earth as they were!
 Now the men were all like women,
 Only used their tongues for weapons! 105

She was thinking of a hunter,

116 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

From another tribe and country,
Young and tall and very handsome,
Who one morning, in the Spring-time,
Came to buy her father's arrows, 110
Sat and rested in the wigwam,
Lingered long about the doorway,
Looking back as he departed.

She had heard her father praise him,
Praise his courage and his wisdom; 115
Would he come again for arrows
To the Falls of Minnehaha?
On the mat her hands lay idle,
And her eyes were very dreamy.

Through their thoughts they heard a foot-
step, 120

Heard a rustling in the branches,
And with glowing cheek and forehead,
With the deer upon his shoulders,
Suddenly from out the woodlands
Hiawatha stood before them. 125

Straight the ancient Arrow-maker
Looked up gravely from his labor,
Laid aside the unfinished arrow,
Bade him enter at the doorway,
Saying, as he rose to meet him, 130

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 117

"Hiawatha, you are welcome!"

At the feet of Laughing Water
Hiawatha laid his burden,
Threw the red deer from his shoulders;
And the maiden looked up at him, 135
Looked up from her mat of rushes,
Said with gentle look and accent,
"You are welcome, Hiawatha!"

Very spacious was the wigwam,
Made of deer-skin dressed and whitened, 140
With the Gods of the Dacotahs
Drawn and painted on its curtains,
And so tall the doorway, hardly
Hiawatha stooped to enter,
Hardly touched his eagle-feathers 145
As he entered at the doorway.

Then uprose the Laughing Water,
From the ground fair Minnehaha,
Laid aside her mat unfinished,
Brought forth food and set before them, 150
Water brought them from the brooklet,
Gave them food in earthen vessels,
Gave them drink in bowls of bass-wood,
Listened while the guest was speaking,
Listened while her father answered, 155

118 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

But not once her lips she opened,
Not a single word she uttered.

Yes, as in a dream she listened
To the words of Hiawatha,
As he talked of old Nokomis, 160
Who had nursed him in his childhood,
As he told of his companions,
Chibiabos, the musician,
And the very strong man, Kwasind,
And of happiness and plenty 165
In the land of the Ojibways,
In the pleasant land and peaceful.

"After many years of warfare,
Many years of strife and bloodshed,
There is peace between the Ojibways 170
And the tribe of the Dacotahs."

Thus continued Hiawatha,
And then added, speaking slowly,
"That this peace may last forever,
And our hands be clasped more closely, 175
And our hearts be more united,
Give me as my wife this maiden,
Minnehaha, Laughing Water,
Loveliest of Dacotah women!"

And the ancient Arrow-maker 180

Paused a moment ere he answered,
 Smoked a little while in silence,
 Looked at Hiawatha proudly, .
 Fondly looked at Laughing Water,
 And made answer very gravely: 185
 "Yes, if Minnehaha wishes;
 Let your heart speak, Minnehaha!"

And the lovely Laughing Water
 Seemed more lovely, as she stood there,
 Neither willing nor reluctant, 190
 As she went to Hiawatha,
 Softly took the seat beside him,
 While she said, and blushed to say it,
 "I will follow you, my husband!"

This was Hiawatha's wooing! 195
 Thus it was he won the daughter
 Of the ancient Arrow-maker,
 In the land of the Dacotahs!

From the wigwam he departed,
 Leading with him Laughing Water; 200
 Hand in hand they went together,
 Through the woodland and the meadow,
 Left the old man standing lonely
 At the doorway of his wigwam,
 Heard the Falls of Minnehaha 205

Calling to them from the distance,
 Crying to them from afar off,
 "Fare thee well, O Minnehaha!"

And the ancient Arrow-maker
 Turned again unto his labor, 210
 Sat down by his sunny doorway,
 Murmuring to himself, and saying:
 "Thus it is our daughters leave us,
 Those we love, and those who love us!
 Just when they have learned to help us, 215
 When we are old and lean upon them,
 Comes a youth with flaunting feathers,
 With his flute of reeds, a stranger
 Wanders piping through the village,
 Beckons to the fairest maiden, 220
 And she follows where he leads her,
 Leaving all things for the stranger!"



Pleasant was the journey homeward,
 Through interminable forests,
 Over meadow, over mountain, 225
 Over river, hill, and hollow.
 Short it seemed to Hiawatha,
 Though they journeyed very slowly,

Though his pace he checked and slackened
To the steps of Laughing Water. 230

Over wide and rushing rivers
In his arms he bore the maiden;
Light he thought her as a feather,
As the plume upon his head-gear;
Cleared the tangled pathway for her, 235
Bent aside the swaying branches,
Made at night a lodge of branches,
And a bed with boughs of hemlock,
And a fire before the doorway
With the dry cones of the pine-tree. 240

All the travelling winds went with them,
O'er the meadow, through the forest;
All the stars of night looked at them,
Watched with sleepless eyes their slumber;
From his ambush in the oak-tree 245
Peeped the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
Watched with eager eyes the lovers;
And the rabbit, the Wabasso,
Scampered from the path before them,
Peering, peeping from his burrow, 250
Sat erect upon his haunches,
Watched with curious eyes the lovers.

Pleasant was the journey homeward!

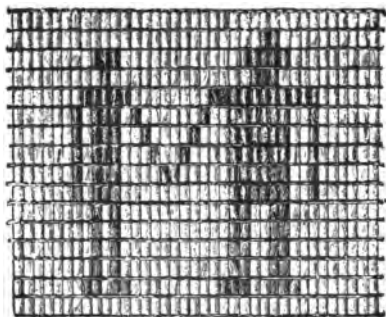
All the birds sang loud and sweetly
 Songs of happiness and heart's-ease; 255
 Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,
 "Happy are you, Hiawatha,
 Having such a wife to love you!"
 Sang the Opechee, the robin,
 "Happy are you, Laughing Water, 260
 Having such a noble husband!"

From the sky the sun benignant
 Looked upon them through the branches,
 Saying to them, "O my children,
 Love is sunshine, hate is shadow, 265
 Life is checkered shade and sunshine,
 Rule by love, O Hiawatha!"

From the sky the moon looked at them,
 Filled the lodge with mystic splendors,
 Whispered to them, "O my children, 270
 Day is restless, night is quiet,
 Man imperious, woman feeble;
 Half is mine, although I follow;
 Rule by patience, Laughing Water!"

Thus it was they journeyed homeward; 275
 Thus it was that Hiawatha
 To the lodge of old Nokomis
 Brought the moonlight, starlight, firelight,

Brought the sunshine of his people,
Minnehaha, Laughing Water,
Handsomest of all the women
In the land of the Dacotahs,
In the land of handsome women.



*Section of Wampum Belt Presented to Wm. Penn.—
Emblem of Brotherly Love.*



Indian Decorated Bowls.



XI.

HIAWATHA'S WEDDING-FEAST.

YOU shall hear how Pau-
Puk-Keewis,
How the handsome Yena-
dizze
Danced at Hiawatha's wed-
ding;

How the gentle Chibiabos,
He the sweetest of musicians,
Sang his songs of love and longing;
How Iagoo, the great boaster,
He the marvellous story-teller,
Told his tales of strange adventure,

5

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 125

That the feast might be more joyous, 10
That the time might pass more gayly,
And the guests be more contented.

Sumptuous was the feast Nokomis
Made at Hiawatha's wedding;



All the bowls were made of bass-wood, 15
White and polished very smoothly,
All the spoons of horn of bison,
Black and polished very smoothly.
She had sent through all the village

126 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Messengers with wands of willow, 20
As a sign of invitation,
As a token of the feasting;
And the wedding guests assembled,
Clad in all their richest raiment,
Robes of fur and belts of wampum, 25
Splendid with their paint and plumage,
Beautiful with beads and tassels.

First they ate the sturgeon, Nahma,
And the pike, the Maskenozha,
Caught and cooked by old Nokomis; 30
Then on pemican they feasted,
Pemican and buffalo marrow,
Haunch of deer and hump of bison,
Yellow cakes of the Mondamin,
And the wild rice of the river. 35

But the gracious Hiawatha,
And the lovely Laughing Water,
And the careful old Nokomis,
Tasted not the food before them,
Only waited on the others, 40
Only served their guests in silence.

And when all the guests had finished,
Old Nokomis, brisk and busy,
From an ample pouch of otter,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 127

Filled the red stone pipes for smoking 45
With tobacco from the South-land,
Mixed with bark of the red willow,
And with herbs and leaves of fragrance.

Then she said, "O Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Dance for us your merry dances, 50
Dance the Beggar's Dance to please us,
That the feast may be more joyous,
That the time may pass more gayly,
And our guests be more contented!"

Then the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis, 55
He the idle Yenadizze,
He the merry mischief-maker,
Whom the people called the Storm-Fool,
Rose among the guests assembled.

Skilled was he in sports and pastimes, 60
In the merry dance of snow-shoes,
In the play of quoits and ball-play;
Skilled was he in games of hazard,
In all games of skill and hazard,
Pugasaing, the Bowl and Counters, 65
Kuntassoo, the Game of Plum-stones,
Though the warriors called him Faint-heart,
Called him coward, Shaugodaya,
Idler, gambler, Yenadizze,

128 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Little heeded he their jesting,
Little cared he for their insults,
For the women and the maidens

70



Buckskin Shirt, Embroidered with Wampum.

Loved the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis.

He was dressed in shirt of doe-skin,
White and soft, and fringed with ermine, 75

All inwrought with beads of wampum;
He was dressed in deer-skin leggings,
Fringed with hedgehog quills and ermine,
And in moccasins of buck-skin,
Thick with quills and beads embroidered. 80
On his head were plumes of swan's down,
On his heels were tails of foxes,
In one hand a fan of feathers,
And a pipe was in the other.

Barred with streaks of red and yellow, 85
Streaks of blue and bright vermilion,
Shone the face of Pau-Puk-Keewis.
From his forehead fell his tresses,
Smooth, and parted like a woman's,
Shining bright with oil, and plaited, 90
Hung with braids of scented grasses,
As among the guests assembled,
To the sound of flutes and singing,
To the sound of drums and voices,
Rose the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis, 95
And began his mystic dances.

First he danced a solemn measure,
Very slow in step and gesture,
In and out among the pine-trees,
Through the shadows and the sunshine, 100

130 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Treading softly like a panther.
Then more swiftly and still swifter,
Whirling, spinning round in circles,
Leaping o'er the guests assembled,
Eddying round and round the wigwam, 105
Till the leaves went whirling with him,
Till the dust and wind together
Swept in eddies round about him.

Then along the sandy margin
Of the lake, the Big-Sea-Water, 110
On he sped with frenzied gestures,
Stamped upon the sand, and tossed it
Wildly in the air around him;
Till the wind became a whirlwind,
Till the sand was blown and sifted 115
Like great snowdrifts o'er the landscape,
Heaping all the shores with Sand Dunes,
Sand Hills of the Nagow Wudjoo!

Thus the merry Pau-Puk-Keewis
Danced his Beggar's Dance to please them, 120
And, returning, sat down laughing
There among the guests assembled,
Sat and fanned himself serenely
With his fan of turkey-feathers.

Then they said to Chibiabos, 125

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 131

To the friend of Hiawatha,
To the sweetest of all singers,
To the best of all musicians,
"Sing to us, O Chibiabos!
Songs of love and songs of longing, 130
That the feast may be more joyous,
That the time may pass more gayly,
And our guests be more contented!"
And the gentle Chibiabos
Sang in accents sweet and tender, 135
Sang in tones of deep emotion,
Songs of love and songs of longing;
Looking still at Hiawatha,
Looking at fair Laughing Water,
Sang he softly, sang in this wise: 140
"Onaway! Awake, beloved!
Thou the wild-flower of the forest!
Thou the wild-bird of the prairie!
Thou with eyes so soft and fawn-like!
"If thou only lookest at me, 145
I am happy, I am happy,
As the lilies of the prairie,
When they feel the dew upon them!
"Sweet thy breath is as the fragrance
Of the wild-flowers in the morning, 150

132 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

As their fragrance is at evening,
In the Moon when leaves are falling.

“Does not all the blood within me
Leap to meet thee, leap to meet thee,
As the springs to meet the sunshine, 155
In the Moon when nights are brightest?

“Onaway! my heart sings to thee,
Sings with joy when thou art near me,
As the sighing, singing branches
In the pleasant Moon of Strawberries! 160

“When thou art not pleased, beloved,
Then my heart is sad and darkened,
As the shining river darkens
When the clouds drop shadows on it!

“When thou smilest, my beloved, 165
Then my troubled heart is brightened,
As in sunshine gleam the ripples
That the cold wind makes in rivers.

“Smiles the earth, and smile the waters,
Smile the cloudless skies above us, 170
But I lose the way of smiling
When thou art no longer near me!

“I myself, myself! behold me!
Blood of my beating heart, behold me!
O awake, awake, beloved! 175

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 133

Onaway! awake, beloved!"

Thus the gentle Chibiabos
Sang his song of love and longing;
And Iagoo, the great boaster,
He the marvellous story-teller, 180
He the friend of old Nokomis,
Jealous of the sweet musician,
Jealous of the applause they gave him,
Saw in all the eyes around him,
Saw in all their looks and gestures, 185
That the wedding guests assembled
Longed to hear his pleasant stories,
His immeasurable falsehoods.

Very boastful was Iagoo;
Never heard he an adventure 190
But himself had met a greater;
Never any deed of daring
But himself had done a bolder;
Never any marvellous story
But himself could tell a stranger. 195

Would you listen to his boasting,
Would you only give him credence,
No one ever shot an arrow
Half so far and high as he had;
Ever caught so many fishes, 200

134 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Ever killed so many reindeer,
Ever trapped so many beaver!
None could run so fast as he could,



“And the wedding guests assembled
Clad in all their richest raiment.”

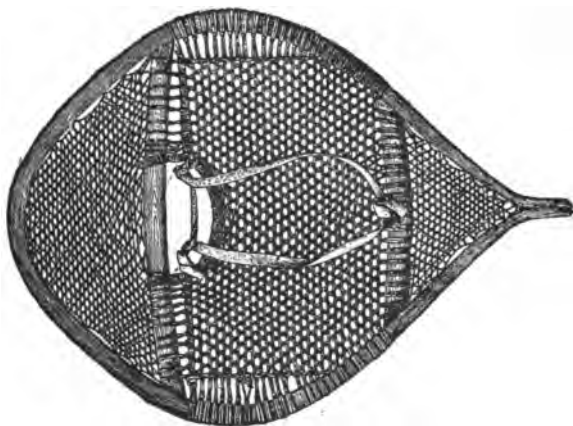
None could dive so deep as he could,
None could swim so far as he could;
None had made so many journeys,
None had seen so many wonders,

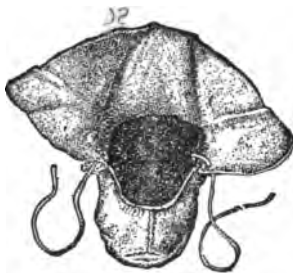
As this wonderful Iagoo,
As this marvellous story-teller!
 Thus his name became a by-word 210
And a jest among the people;
And whene'er a boastful hunter
Praised his own address too highly,
Or a warrior, home returning,
Talked too much of his achievements, 215
All his hearers cried, "Iagoo!
Here's Iagoo come among us!"
 He it was who carved the cradle
Of the little Hiawatha,
Carved its framework out of linden, 220
Bound it strong with reindeer sinews;
He it was who taught him later
How to make his bows and arrows,
How to make the bows of ash-tree,
And the arrows of the oak-tree. 225
So among the guests assembled
At my Hiawatha's wedding
Sat Iagoo, old and ugly,
Sat the marvellous story-teller.
 And they said, "O good Iagoo, 230
Tell us now a tale of wonder,
Tell us of some strange adventure,

136 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

That the feast may be more joyous,
That the time may pass more gayly,
And our guests be more contented!" 235

And Iagoo answered straightway,
"You shall hear a tale of wonder,
You shall hear the strange adventures
Of Osseo, the Magician,
From the Evening Star descended." 240





Iroquois Moccasins of Buckskin.



XII.

THE SON OF THE EVENING STAR.

AN it be the sun descend-
ing
O'er the level plain of
water?
Or the Red Swan floating,
flying,

Wounded by the magic arrow,
Staining all the waves with crimson, 5
With the crimson of its life-blood,
Filling all the air with splendor,

138 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

With the splendor of its plumage?

Yes; it is the sun descending,
Sinking down into the water; 10

All the sky is stained with purple,
All the water flushed with crimson!

No; it is the Red Swan floating,
Diving down beneath the water;
To the sky its wings are lifted, 15

With its blood the waves are reddened!

Over it the Star of Evening
Melts and trembles through the purple,
Hangs suspended in the twilight

No; it is a bead of wampum 20

On the robes of the Great Spirit,
As he passes through the twilight,
Walks in silence through the heavens.

This with joy beheld Iagoo
And he said in haste: "Behold it! 25
See the sacred Star of Evening!

You shall hear a tale of wonder,
Hear the story of Osseo!

Son of the Evening Star, Osseo!

"Once, in days no more remembered, 30
Ages nearer the beginning,

When the heavens were closer to us,

And the Gods were more familiar,
 In the North-land lived a hunter,
 With ten young and comely daughters, 35
 Tall and lithe as wands of willow;
 Only Oweenee, the youngest,
 She the wilful and the wayward,
 She the silent, dreamy maiden,
 Was the fairest of the sisters. 40

“All these women married warriors,
 Married brave and haughty husbands;
 Only Oweenee, the youngest,
 Laughed and flouted all her lovers,
 All her young and handsome suitors, 45
 And then married old Osseo,
 Old Osseo, poor and ugly,
 Broken with age and weak with coughing,
 Always coughing like a squirrel.

“Ah, but beautiful within him 50
 Was the spirit of Osseo,
 From the Evening Star descended,
 Star of Evening, Star of Woman,
 Star of tenderness and passion!
 All its fire was in his bosom 55
 All its beauty in his spirit,
 All its mystery in his being,

140 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

All its splendor in his language!

“And her lovers, the rejected,
Handsome men with belts of wampum, 60
Handsome men with paint and feathers,
Pointed at her in derision,
Followed her with jest and laughter.
But she said: ‘I care not for you,
Care not for your belts of wampum, 65
Care not for your paint and feathers,
Care not for your jest and laughter;
I am happy with Osseo!’

“Once to some great feast invited,
Through the damp and dusk of evening 70
Walked together the ten sisters,
Walked together with their husbands;
Slowly followed old Osseo,
With fair Oweencee beside him;
All the others chatted gayly, 75
These two only walked in silence.

“At the western sky Osseo
Gazed intent, as if imploring,
Often stopped and gazed imploring
At the trembling Star of Evening, 80
At the tender Star of Woman;
And they heard him murmur softly,
‘Ah, showain nemeshin, Nosa!

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 141

Pity, pity me, my father!

“‘Listen!’ said the elder sister, 85

‘He is praying to his father!

What a pity that the old man

Does not stumble in the pathway,

Does not break his neck by falling!”

And they laughed till all the forest 90

Rang with their unseemly laughter.

“On their pathway through the woodlands

Lay an oak, by storms uprooted,

Lay the great trunk of an oak-tree,

Buried half in leaves and mosses, 95

Mouldering, crumbling, huge and hollow.

And Osseo, when he saw it,

Gave a shout, a cry of anguish,

Leaped into its yawning cavern,

At one end went in an old man, 100

Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly;

From the other came a young man,

Tall and straight and strong and handsome.

“Thus Osseo was transfigured,

Thus restored to youth and beauty; 105

But, alas for good Osseo,

And for Oweenee, the faithful!

Strangely, too, was she transfigured.

Changed into a weak old woman,
 With a staff she tottered onward, 110
 Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly!
 And the sisters and their husbands
 Laughed until the echoing forest
 Rang with their unseemly laughter.

"But Osseo turned not from her, 115
 Walked with slower step beside her,
 Took her hand, as brown and withered
 As an oak-leaf is in winter,
 Called her sweetheart, Nenemoosha,
 Soothed her with soft words of kindness, 120
 Till they reached the lodge of feasting,
 Till they sat down in the wigwam,
 Sacred to the Star of Evening,
 To the tender Star of Woman.

"Wrapt in visions, lost in dreaming, 125
 At the banquet sat Osseo;
 All were merry, all were happy,
 All were joyous but Osseo.
 Neither food nor drink he tasted,
 Neither did he speak nor listen, 130
 But as one bewildered sat he,
 Looking dreamily and sadly,
 First at Oweenee, then upward

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 143

At the gleaming sky above them.

“Then a voice was heard, a whisper, 135

Coming from the starry distance,

Coming from the empty vastness,

Low, and musical, and tender;

And the voice said: ‘O Osseo!

O my son, my best beloved! 140

Broken are the spells that bound you,

All the charms of the magicians,

All the magic powers of evil;

Come to me; ascend, Osseo!

“Taste the food that stands before you: 145

It is blessed and enchanted,

It has magic virtues in it,

It will change you to a spirit.

All your bowls and all your kettles

Shall be wood and clay no longer; 150

But the bowls be changed to wampum,

And the kettles shall be silver;

They shall shine like shells of scarlet,

Like the fire shall gleam and glimmer.

“And the women shall no longer 155

Bear the dreary doom of labor,

But be changed to birds, and glisten

With the beauty of the starlight,

144 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Painted with the dusky splendors
Of the skies and clouds of evening! 160

“What Osseo heard as whispers,
What as words he comprehended,
Was but music to the others,
Music as of birds afar off,
Of the whippoorwill afar off, 165
Of the lonely Wawonaissa
Singing in the darksome forest.

“Then the lodge began to tremble,
Straight began to shake and tremble,
And they felt it rising, rising, 170
Slowly through the air ascending,
From the darkness of the tree-tops
Forth into the dewy starlight,

Till it passed the topmost branches;
And behold! the wooden dishes 175
All were changed to shells of scarlet!

And behold! the earthen kettles
All were changed to bowls of silver!
And the roof-poles of the wigwam
Were as glittering rods of silver, 180
And the roof of bark upon them
As the shining shards of beetles.

“Then Osseo gazed around him,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. .145

And he saw the nine fair sisters,
All the sisters and their husbands, 185
Changed to birds of various plumage.
Some were jays and some were magpies,
Others thrushes, others blackbirds;
And they hopped, and sang, and twittered,
Perked and fluttered all their feathers, 190
Strutted in their shining plumage,
And their tails like fans unfolded.

“Only Oweenee, the youngest,
Was not changed, but sat in silence,
Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly, 195
Looking sadly at the others;
Till Osseo, gazing upward,
Gave another cry of anguish,
Such a cry as he had uttered
By the oak-tree in the forest. 200

“Then returned her youth and beauty,
And her soiled and tattered garments
Were transformed to robes of ermine,
And her staff became a feather,
Yes, a shining silver feather! 205

“And again the wigwam trembled,
Swayed and rushed through airy currents,
Through transparent cloud and vapor,

And amid celestial splendors
 On the Evening Star alighted, 210
 As a snow-flake falls on snow-flake,
 As a leaf drops on a river,
 As the thistle-down on water.

"Forth with cheerful words of welcome
 Came the father of Osseo, 215
 He with radiant locks of silver,
 He with eyes serene and tender.
 And he said: 'My son, Osseo,
 Hang the cage of birds you bring there,
 Hang the cage with rods of silver, 220
 And the birds with glistening feathers,
 At the doorway of my wigwam.'

"At the door he hung the bird-cage,
 And they entered in and gladly
 Listened to Osseo's father, 225
 Ruler of the Star of Evening,
 As he said: 'O my Osseo!
 I have had compassion on you,
 Given you back your youth and beauty,
 Into birds of various plumage 230
 Changed your sisters and their husbands;
 Changed them thus because they mocked you;
 In the figure of the old man,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 147

In that aspect sad and wrinkled,
Could not see your heart of passion, 235
Could not see your youth immortal;
Only Oweenee, the faithful,
Saw your naked heart and loved you.

“In the lodge that glimmers yonder,
In the little star that twinkles 240
Through the vapors, on the left hand,
Lives the envious Evil Spirit,
The Wabeno, the magician,
Who transformed you to an old man.
Take heed lest his beams fall on you, 245
For the rays he darts around him
Are the power of his enchantment,
Are the arrows that he uses.’

“Many years, in peace and quiet,
On the peaceful Star of Evening 250
Dwelt Osseo with his father;
Many years, in song and flutter,
At the doorway of the wigwam,
Hung the cage with rods of silver,
And fair Oweenee, the faithful, 255
Bore a son unto Osseo,
With the beauty of his mother,
With the courage of his father.

"And the boy grew up and prospered,
 And Osseo, to delight him, 260
 Made him little bows and arrows,
 Opened the great cage of silver,
 And let loose his aunts and uncles,
 All those birds with glossy feathers,
 For his little son to shoot at. 265

"Round and round they wheeled and darted,
 Filled the Evening Star with music,
 With their songs of joy and freedom;
 Filled the Evening Star with splendor,
 With the fluttering of their plumage; 270
 Till the boy, the little hunter,
 Bent his bow and shot an arrow,
 Shot a swift and fatal arrow,
 And a bird, with shining feathers,
 At his feet fell wounded sorely. 275

"But, O wondrous transformation!
 'T was no bird he saw before him!
 'T was a beautiful young woman,
 With the arrow in her bosom!
 "When her blood fell on the planet, 280
 On the sacred Star of Evening,
 Broken was the spell of magic,
 Powerless was the strange enchantment,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 149

And the youth, the fearless bowman,
Suddenly felt himself descending, 285
Held by unseen hands, but sinking
Downward through the empty spaces,
Downward through the clouds and vapors,
Till he rested on an island,
On an island, green and grassy, 290
Yonder in the Big-Sea-Water.

"After him he saw descending
All the birds with shining feathers,
Fluttering, falling, wafted downward,
Like the painted leaves of Autumn; 295
And the lodge with poles of silver,
With its roof like wings of beetles,
Like the shining shards of beetles,
By the winds of heaven uplifted,
Slowly sank upon the island, 300
Bringing back the good Osseo,
Bringing Oweenee, the faithful.

"Then the birds, again transfigured,
Reassumed the shape of mortals,
Took their shape, but not their stature; 305
They remained as Little People,
Like the pygmies, the Puk-Wudjies,
And on pleasant nights of Summer,

150 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

When the Evening Star was shining,
Hand in hand they danced together 310
On the island's craggy headlands,
On the sand-beach low and level.

"Still their glittering lodge is seen there,
On the tranquil Summer evenings,
And upon the shore the fisher 315
Sometimes hears their happy voices,
Sees them dancing in the starlight!"

When the story was completed,
When the wondrous tale was ended,
Looking round upon his listeners, 320
Solemnly Iagoo added:

"There are great men, I have known such,
Whom their people understand not,
Whom they even make a jest of,
Scoff and jeer at in derision. 325
From the story of Osseo

Let them learn the fate of jesters!"

All the wedding guests delighted
Listened to the marvellous story,
Listened laughing and applauding, 330
And they whispered to each other:
"Does he mean himself, I wonder?
And are we the aunts and uncles?"

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 151

Then again sang Chibiabos,
Sang a song of love and longing, 335
In those accents sweet and tender,
In those tones of pensive sadness,
Sang a maiden's lamentation
For her lover, her Algonquin.

"When I think of my beloved, 340
Ah me! think of my beloved,
When my heart is thinking of him,
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!

"Ah, me! when I parted from him,
Round my neck he hung the wampum, 345
As a pledge, the snow-white wampum,
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!

"I will go with you, he whispered,
Ah me! to your native country;
Let me go with you, he whispered, 350
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!

"Far away, away, I answered,
Very far away, I answered,
Ah me! is my native country,
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin! 355

"When I looked back to behold him,
Where we parted, to behold him,
After me he still was gazing,



Apache Indians Lassoing Wild Horses.

XIII.

BLESSING THE CORN-FIELDS.



ING, O song of Hiawatha,
 Of the happy days that fol-
 lowed,
 In the land of the Ojibways,
 In the pleasant land and
 peaceful!
 Sing the mysteries of Mon-
 damin, 5
 Sing the Blessing of the
 Corn-fields!

Buried was the bloody hatchet,
 Buried was the dreadful war-club,
 Buried were all warlike weapons,

154 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

And the war-cry was forgotten. 10
There was peace among the nations;
Unmolested roved the hunters,
Built the birch canoe for sailing,
Caught the fish in lake and river,
Shot the deer and trapped the beaver; 15
Unmolested worked the women,
Made their sugar from the maple,
Gathered wild rice in the meadows,
Dressed the skins of deer and beaver.

All around the happy village 20
Stood the maize-fields, green and shining,
Waved the green plumes of Mondamin,
Waved his soft and sunny tresses,
Filling all the land with plenty.
'T was the women who in Spring-time 25
Planted the broad fields and fruitful,
Buried in the earth Mondamin;
'T was the women who in Autumn
Stripped the yellow husks of harvest,
Stripped the garments from Mondamin, 30
Even as Hiawatha taught them.

Once, when all the maize was planted,
Hiawatha, wise and thoughtful,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 155

Spake and said to Minnehaha,
To his wife, the Laughing Water: 35
"You shall bless to-night the corn-fields,
Draw a magic circle round them,
To protect them from destruction,
Blast of mildew, blight of insect,
Wagemin, the thief of corn-fields, 40
Paimosaid, who steals the maize-ear!
"In the night, when all is silence,
In the night, when all is darkness,
When the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin,
Shuts the doors of all the wigwams, 45
So that not an ear can hear you,
So that not an eye can see you,
Rise up from your bed in silence,
Lay aside your garments wholly,
Walk around the fields you planted, 50
Round the borders of the corn-fields,
Covered by your tresses only,
Robed with darkness as a garment.
"Thus the fields shall be more fruitful,
And the passing of your footsteps 55
Draw a magic circle round them,
So that neither blight nor mildew,

From her bed rose Laughing Water,
 Laid aside her garments wholly,
 And with darkness clothed and guarded,
 Unashamed and unaffrighted, 85
 Walked securely round the corn-fields,
 Drew the sacred, magic circle
 Of her footprints round the corn-fields.

No one but the Midnight only
 Saw her beauty in the darkness, 90
 No one but the Wawonaissa
 Heard the panting of her bosom;
 Guskewau, the darkness, wrapped her
 Closely in his sacred mantle,
 So that none might see her beauty, 95
 So that none might boast, "I saw her!"

On the morrow, as the day dawned,
 Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens,
 Gathered all his black marauders,
 Crows and blackbirds, jays and ravens, 100
 Clamorous on the dusky tree-tops,
 And descended, fast and fearless,
 On the fields of Hiawatha,
 On the grave of the Mondamin.

"We will drag Mondamin," said they, 105

158 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

"From the grave where he is buried,
Spite of all the magic circles
Laughing Water draws around it,
Spite of all the sacred footprints
Minnehaha stamps upon it!" 110

 But the wary Hiawatha,
Ever thoughtful, careful, watchful,
Had o'erheard the scornful laughter
When they mocked him from the tree-tops.
"Kaw!" he said, "my friends the ravens! 115
Kahgahgee, my King of Ravens!
I will teach you all a lesson
That shall not be soon forgotten!"

 He had risen before the daybreak,
He had spread o'er all the corn-fields 120
Snares to catch the black marauders,
And was lying now in ambush
In the neighboring grove of pine-trees,
Waiting for the crows and blackbirds,
Waiting for the jays and ravens. 125

 Soon they came with caw and clamor,
Rush of wings and cry of voices,
To their work of devastation,
Settling down upon the corn-fields,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 159

Delving deep with beak and talon, 130
For the body of Mondamin.

And with all their craft and cunning,
All their skill in wiles of warfare,
They perceived no danger near them,
Till their claws became entangled, 135
Till they found themselves imprisoned
In the snares of Hiawatha.

From his place of ambush came he,
Striding terrible among them,
And so awful was his aspect 140
That the bravest quailed with terror.
Without mercy he destroyed them
Right and left, by tens and twenties,
And their wretched, lifeless bodies
Hung aloft on poles for scarecrows 145
Round the consecrated corn-fields,
As a signal of his vengeance,
As a warning to marauders.

Only Kahgahgee, the leader,
Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, 150
He alone was spared among them
As a hostage for his people.
With his prisoner-string he bound him,

Led him captive to his wigwam,
Tied him fast with cords of elm-bark 155
To the ridge-pole of his wigwam.

“Kahgahgee, my raven!” said he,
“You the leader of the robbers,
You the plotter of this mischief,
The contriver of this outrage, 160
I will keep you, I will hold you,
As a hostage for your people,
As a pledge of good behavior!”

And he left him, grim and sulky,
Sitting in the morning sunshine 165
On the summit of the wigwam,
Croaking fiercely his displeasure,
Flapping his great sable pinions,
Vainly struggling for his freedom,
Vainly calling on his people! 170

Summer passed, and Shawondasee
Breathed his sighs o'er all the landscape,
From the South-land sent his ardors,
Wafted kisses warm and tender;
And the maize-field grew and ripened, 175
Till it stood in all the splendor
Of its garments green and yellow,

Of its tassels and its plumage,
And the maize-ears full and shining
Gleamed from bursting sheaths of verdure. 180

Then Nokomis, the old woman,
Spake, and said to Minnehaha:
" 'T is the Moon when leaves are falling;
All the wild-rice has been gathered,
And the maize is ripe and ready; 185
Let us gather in the harvest,
Let us wrestle with Mondamin,
Strip him of his plumes and tassels,
Of his garments green and yellow!"

And the merry Laughing Water 190
Went rejoicing from the wigwam,
With Nokomis, old and wrinkled,
And they called the women round them,
Called the young men and the maidens,
To the harvest of the corn-fields, 195
To the husking of the maize-ear.

On the border of the forest,
Underneath the fragrant pine-trees,
Sat the old men and the warriors
Smoking in the pleasant shadow. 200
In uninterrupted silence

Looked they at the gamesome labor
 Of the young men and the women;
 Listened to their noisy talking,
 To their laughter and their singing, 205
 Heard them chattering like the magpies,
 Heard them laughing like the blue-jays,
 Heard them singing like the robins.

And whene'er some lucky maiden
 Found a red ear in the husking, 210
 Found a maize-ear red as blood is,
 "Nushka!" cried they all together,
 "Nushka! you shall have a sweetheart,
 You shall have a handsome husband!"
 "Ugh!" the old men all responded, 215
 From their seats beneath the pine-trees.

And whene'er a youth or maiden
 Found a crooked ear in husking,
 Found a maize-ear in the husking
 Blighted, mildewed, or misshapen, 220
 Then they laughed and sang together,
 Crept and limped about the corn-fields,
 Mimicked in their gait and gestures
 Some old man, bent almost double,
 Singing singly or together: 225

“Wagemin, the thief of corn-fields!
Paimosaid, the skulking robber!”

Till the corn-fields rang with laughter,
Till from Hiawatha's wigwam
Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, 230
Screamed and quivered in his anger,
And from all the neighboring tree-tops
Cawed and croaked the black marauders.
“Ugh!” the old men all responded,
From their seats beneath the pine-trees! 235





XIV.

PICTURE-WRITING.

N those days said Hia-
watha,
"Lo! how all things fade
and perish!

From the memory of the old men
Pass away the great traditions,
The achievements of the warriors, 5
The adventures of the hunters,
All the wisdom of the Medas,
All the craft of the Wabenos,
All the marvellous dreams and visions
Of the Jossakeeds, the Prophets! 10
"Great men die and are forgotten,
Wise men speak; their words of wisdom
Perish in the ears that hear them,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

165

Do not reach the generations
 That, as yet unborn, are waiting 15
 In the great, mysterious darkness
 Of the speechless days that shall be!
 "On the grave-posts of our fathers
 Are no signs, no figures painted;
 Who are in those graves we know not, 20
 Only know they are our fathers.
 Of what kith they are and kindred,
 From what old, ancestral Totem,
 Be it Eagle, Bear or Beaver,
 They descended, this we know not, 25
 Only know they are our fathers.
 "Face to face we speak together,
 But we cannot speak when absent,
 Cannot send our voices from us
 To the friends that dwell afar off; 30
 Cannot send a secret message,
 But the bearer learns our secret,
 May pervert it, may betray it,
 May reveal it unto others."
 Thus said Hiawatha, walking 35
 In the solitary forest,
 Pondering, musing in the forest,
 On the welfare of his people.

From his pouch he took his colors,
 Took his paints of different colors, 40
 On the smooth bark of a birch-tree
 Painted many shapes and figures,
 Wonderful and mystic figures,
 And each figure had a meaning,
 Each some word or thought suggested. 45

Gitche Manito the Mighty,
 He, the Master of Life, was painted
 As an egg, with points projecting
 To the four winds of the heavens.
 Everywhere is the Great Spirit, 50
 Was the meaning of this symbol.

Mitche Manito the Mighty,
 He the dreadful Spirit of Evil,
 As a serpent was depicted,
 As Kenabeek, the great serpent. 55
 Very crafty, very cunning,
 Is the creeping Spirit of Evil,
 Was the meaning of this symbol.

Life and Death he drew as circles,
 Life was white, but Death was darkened; 60
 Sun and moon and stars he painted,
 Man and beast, and fish and reptile,
 Forests, mountains, lakes, and rivers.

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 167

For the earth he drew a straight line,
For the sky a bow above it; 65
White the space between for day-time,
Filled with little stars for night-time;
On the left a point for sunrise,
On the right a point for sunset,
On the top a point for noontide, 70
And for rain and cloudy weather
Waving lines descending from it.

Footprints pointing towards a wigwam
Were a sign of invitation,
Were a sign of guests assembling; 75
Bloody hands with palms uplifted
Were a symbol of destruction,
Were a hostile sign and symbol.

All these things did Hiawatha
Show unto his wondering people, 80
And interpreted their meaning,
And he said: "Behold, your grave-posts
Have no mark, no sign, nor symbol.
Go and paint them all with figures;
Each one with its household symbol, 85
With its own ancestral Totem;
So that those who follow after
May distinguish them and know them."

168 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

And they painted on the grave-posts
On the graves yet unforgotten, 90
Each his own ancestral Totem,
Each the symbol of his household;
Figures of the Bear and Reindeer,
Of the Turtle, Crane, and Beaver,
Each inverted as a token 95
That the owner was departed,
That the chief who bore the symbol
Lay beneath in dust and ashes.

And the Jossakeeds, the Prophets,
The Wabenos, the Magicians, 100
And the Medicine-men, the Medas,
Painted upon bark and deer-skin
Figures for the songs they chanted,
For each song a separate symbol,
Figures mystical and awful, 105
Figures strange and brightly colored;
And each figure had its meaning,
Each some magic song suggested.

The Great Spirit, the Creator,
Flashing light through all the heaven; 110
The Great Serpent, the Kenabeek,
With his bloody crest erected,
Creeping, looking into heaven;

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 169

In the sky the sun, that glistens,
And the moon eclipsed and dying; 115
Owl and eagle, crane and hen-hawk,
And the cormorant, bird of magic;
Headless men, that walk the heavens,
Bodies lying pierced with arrows,
Bloody hands of death uplifted, 120
Flags on graves, and great war-captains
Grasping both the earth and heaven!

Such as these the shapes they painted
On the birch-bark and the deer-skin;
Songs of war and songs of hunting, 125
Songs of medicine and of magic,
All were written in these figures,
For each figure had its meaning,
Each its separate song recorded.

Nor forgotten was the Love-Song, 130
The most subtle of all medicines,
The most potent spell of magic,
Dangerous more than war or hunting!
Thus the Love-Song was recorded,
Symbol and interpretation. 135

First a human figure standing,
Painted in the brightest scarlet;
'T is the lover, the musician,

170 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

And the meaning is, "My painting
Makes me powerful over others." 140

Then the figure seated, singing,
Playing on a drum of magic,
And the interpretation, "Listen!
'T is my voice you hear, my singing!"

Then the same red figure seated 145
In the shelter of a wigwam,
And the meaning of the symbol,
"I will come and sit beside you
In the mystery of my passion!"

Then two figures, man and woman, 150
Standing hand in hand together
With their hands so clasped together
That they seem in one united,
And the words thus represented
Are, "I see your heart within you, 155
And your cheeks are red with blushes!"

Next the maiden on an island,
In the centre of an island;
And the song this shape suggested
Was, "Though you were at a distance, 160
Were upon some far-off island,
Such the spell I cast upon you,
Such the magic power of passion,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 171

I could straightway draw you to me!"

Then the figure of the maiden 165

Sleeping, and the lover near her,

Whispering to her in her slumbers,

Saying, "Though you were far from me

In the land of Sleep and Silence,

Still the voice of love would reach you!" 170

And the last of all the figures

Was a heart within a circle,

Drawn within a magic circle;

And the image had this meaning:

"Naked lies your heart before me, 175

To your naked heart I whisper!"

Thus it was that Hiawatha,

In his wisdom, taught the people

All the mysteries of painting,

All the art of Picture-Writing, 180

On the smooth bark of the birch-tree,

On the white skin of the reindeer,

On the grave-posts of the village.



"Danced the medicine-dance around him;
And upstarting wild and haggard."



XV.

HIAWATHA'S LAMENTATION.

N those days the Evil
Spirits,
All the Manitos of mis-
chief,

Fearing Hiawatha's wisdom,
And his love for Chibiabos,
Jealous of their faithful friendship,
And their noble words and actions,

5

Made at length a league against them,
To molest them and destroy them.

Hiawatha, wise and wary,
Often said to Chibiabos, 10
"O my brother! do not leave me,
Lest the Evil Spirits harm you!"
Chibiabos, young and heedless,
Laughing shook his coal-black tresses,
Answered ever sweet and childlike, 15
"Do not fear for me, O brother!
Harm and evil come not near me!"

Once when Peboan, the Winter,
Roofed with ice the Big-Sea-Water,
When the snow-flakes, whirling downward, 20
Hissed among the withered oak-leaves,
Changed the pine-trees into wigwams,
Covered all the earth with silence,—
Armed with arrows, shod with snow-shoes,
Heeding not his brother's warning, 25
Fearing not the Evil Spirits,
Forth to hunt the deer with antlers
All alone went Chibiabos.

Right across the Big-Sea-Water
Sprang with speed the deer before him. 30
With the wind and snow he followed,

174 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

O'er the treacherous ice he followed,
Wild with all the fierce commotion
And the rapture of the hunting.

But beneath, the Evil Spirits 35
Lay in ambush, waiting for him,
Broke the treacherous ice beneath him,
Dragged him downward to the bottom,
Buried in the sand his body.

Unktahee, the god of water, 40
He the god of the Dacotahs,
Drowned him in the deep abysses
Of the lake of Gitche Gumees.

From the headlands Hiawatha
Sent forth such a wail of anguish, 45
Such a fearful lamentation,
That the bison paused to listen,
And the wolves howled from the prairies,
And the thunder in the distance
Starting answered "Baim-wawa!" 50

Then his face with black he painted,
With his robe his head he covered,
In his wigwam sat lamenting,
Seven long weeks he sat lamenting,
Uttering still this moan of sorrow:— 55
"He is dead, the sweet musician!

He the sweetest of all singers!
 He has gone from us forever,
 He has moved a little nearer
 To the Master of all music, 60
 To the Master of all singing!
 O my brother, Chibiabos!"

And the melancholy fir-trees
 Waved their dark green fans above him,
 Waved their purple cones above him, 65
 Sighing with him to console him,
 Mingling with his lamentation
 Their complaining, their lamenting.

Came the Spring, and all the forest
 Looked in vain for Chibiabos; 70
 Sighed the rivulet, Sebowisha,
 Sighed the rushes in the meadow.

From the tree-tops sang the bluebird,
 Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,
 "Chibiabos! Chibiabos! 75
 He is dead, the sweet musician!"

From the wigwam sang the robin,
 Sang the Opechee, the robin,
 "Chibiabos! Chibiabos!
 He is dead, the sweetest singer!" 80

And at night through all the forest

There a magic drink they gave him,
 Made of Nahma-wusk, the spearmint,
 And Wabeno-wusk, the yarrow,
 Roots of power, and herbs of healing; 110
 Beat their drums, and shook their rattles;
 Chanted singly and in chorus,
 Mystic songs, like these, they chanted.

"I myself, myself! behold me!
 'T is the great Gray Eagle talking; 115
 Come, ye white crows, come and hear him!
 The loud-speaking thunder helps me;
 All the unseen spirits help me;
 I can hear their voices calling,
 All around the sky I hear them! 120
 I can blow you strong, my brother,
 I can heal you, Hiawatha!"

"Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus,
 "Way-ha-way!" the mystic chorus.

"Friends of mine are all the serpents! 125
 Hear me shake my skin of hen-hawk!
 Mahng, the white loon, I can kill him;
 I can shoot your heart and kill it!
 I can blow you strong, my brother,
 I can heal you, Hiawatha!" 130

"Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus,

178 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

"Way-ha-way!" the mystic chorus.

"I myself, myself! the prophet!
When I speak the wigwam trembles,
Shakes the Sacred Lodge with terror, 135
Hands unseen begin to shake it!

When I walk, the sky I tread on
Bends and makes a noise beneath me!
I can blow you strong, my brother!
Rise and speak, O Hiawatha!" 140

"Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus,
"Way-ha-way!" the mystic chorus.

Then they shook their medicine-pouches
O'er the head of Hiawatha,
Danced their medicine-dance around him; 145
And upstarting wild and haggard,
Like a man from dreams awakened,
He was healed of all his madness.
As the clouds are swept from heaven,
Straightway from his brain departed 150
All his moody melancholy;
As the ice is swept from rivers,
Straightway from his heart departed
All his sorrow and affliction.

Then they summoned Chibiabos 155
From his grave beneath the waters,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 179

From the sands of Gitche Gumee
Summoned Hiawatha's brother.
And so mighty was the magic
Of that cry and invocation, 160
That he heard it as he lay there
Underneath the Big-Sea-Water;
From the sand he rose and listened,
Heard the music and the singing,
Came, obedient to the summons, 165
To the doorway of the wigwam,
But to enter they forbade him.

Through a chink a coal they gave him,
Through the door a burning fire-brand;
Ruler in the Land of Spirits, 170
Ruler o'er the dead, they made him,
Telling him a fire to kindle
For all those that died thereafter,
Camp-fires for their night encampments
On their solitary journey 175
To the kingdom of Ponemah,
To the land of the Hereafter.

From the village of his childhood,
From the homes of those who knew him,
Passing silent through the forest, 180
Like a smoke-wreath wafted sideways,

Slowly vanished Chibiabos!
 Where he passed, the branches moved not,
 Where he trod, the grasses bent not,
 And the fallen leaves of last year 185
 Made no sound beneath his footsteps.

Four whole days he journeyed onward
 Down the pathway of the dead men;
 On the dead man's strawberry feasted,
 Crossed the melancholy river, 190
 On the swinging log he crossed it,—
 Came unto the Lake of Silver,
 In the Stone Canoe was carried
 To the Islands of the Blessed,
 To the land of ghosts and shadows. 195

On that journey, moving slowly,
 Many weary spirits saw he,
 Panting under heavy burdens,
 Laden with war-clubs, bows and arrows,
 Robes of fur, and pots and kettles, 200
 And with food that friends had given
 For that solitary journey.

"Ay! why do the living," said they,
 "Lay such heavy burdens on us!
 Better were it to go naked, 205
 Better were it to go fasting,

Than to bear such heavy burdens
On our long and weary journey!"

Forth then issued Hiawatha,
Wandered eastward, wandered westward, 210
Teaching men the use of simples
And the antidotes for poisons,
And the cure of all diseases.
Thus was first made known to mortals
All the mystery of Medamin, 215
All the sacred art of healing.



*Basket Used by the Pawnee Indians for Carrying
Corn or Berries.*



"With the sacred belt of Wampum."



XVI.

PAU-PUK-KEEWIS.

OU shall hear how Pau-
Puk-Keewis,
He, the handsome Yena-
dizze,
Whom the people called the
Storm Fool,

Vexed the village with disturbance;
You shall hear of all his mischief,
And his flight from Hiawatha,
And his wondrous transmigrations,
And the end of his adventures.

5

On the shores of Gitche Gumee,
On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water

10

Stood the lodge of Pau-Puk-Keewis.
 It was he who in his frenzy
 Whirled these drifting sands together,
 On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo, 15
 When, among the guests assembled,
 He so merrily and madly
 Danced at Hiawatha's wedding,
 Danced the Beggar's Dance to please them.

Now, in search of new adventures, 20
 From his lodge went Pau-Puk-Keewis,
 Came with speed into the village,
 Found the young men all assembled
 In the lodge of old Iagoo,
 Listening to his monstrous stories, 25
 To his wonderful adventures.

He was telling them the story
 Of Ojeeg, the Summer-Maker,
 How he made a hole in heaven,
 How he climbed up into heaven, 30
 And let out the summer-weather,
 The perpetual, pleasant Summer;
 How the Otter first essayed it;
 How the Beaver, Lynx, and Badger
 Tried in turn the great achievement, 35

From the summit of the mountain
 Smote their fists against the heavens,
 Smote against the sky their foreheads,
 Cracked the sky, but could not break it;
 How the Wolverine, uprising, 40
 Made him ready for the encounter,
 Bent his knees down, like a squirrel,
 Drew his arms back, like a cricket.

"Once he leaped," said old Iagoo,
 "Once he leaped, and lo! above him 45
 Bent the sky, as ice in rivers
 When the waters rise beneath it;
 Twice he leaped, and lo! above him
 Cracked the sky, as ice in rivers
 When the freshet is at highest! 50
 Thrice he leaped, and lo! above him
 Broke the shattered sky asunder,
 And he disappeared within it,
 And Ojeeg, the Fisher Weasel,
 With a bound went in behind him!" 55

"Hark you!" shouted Pau-Puk-Keewis
 As he entered at the doorway;
 "I am tired of all this talking,
 Tired of old Iagoo's stories,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 185

Tired of Hiawatha's wisdom. 60
Here is something to amuse you,
Better than this endless talking."

Then from out his pouch of wolf-skin
Forth he drew, with solemn manner,
All the game of Bowl and Counters, 65
Pugasaing, with thirteen pieces.

White on one side were they painted,
And vermilion on the other;
Two Kenabeeks or great serpents,
Two Ininewug or wedge-men, 70

One great war-club, Pugamaugun,
And one slender fish, the Keego,
Four round pieces, Ozawabeeks,
And three Sheshebwug or ducklings.
All were made of bone and painted, 75

All except the Ozawabeeks;
These were brass, on one side burnished,
And were black upon the other.

In a wooden bowl he placed them,
Shook and jostled them together, 80
Threw them on the ground before him,
Thus exclaiming and explaining:
"Red side up are all the pieces,

And one great Kenabeek standing
 On the bright side of a brass piece, 85
 On a burnished Ozawabeek;
 Thirteen tens and eight are counted."

Then again he shook the pieces,
 Shook and jostled them together,
 Threw them on the ground before him, 90
 Still exclaiming and explaining:
 "White are both the great Kenabeeks,
 White the Ininewug, the wedge-men,
 Red are all the other pieces;
 Five tens and an eight are counted." 95

Thus he taught the game of hazard,
 Thus displayed it and explained it,
 Running through its various chances,
 Various changes, various meanings:
 Twenty curious eyes stared at him, 100
 Full of eagerness stared at him.

"Many games," said old Iagoo,
 "Many games of skill and hazard
 Have I seen in different nations,
 Have I played in different countries. 105
 He who plays with old Iagoo
 Must have very nimble fingers;

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

187

Though you think yourself so skilful
I can beat you, Pau-Puk-Keewis,
I can even give you lessons 110
In your game of Bowl and Counters!"

So they sat and played together,
All the old men and the young men,
Played for dresses, weapons, wampum,
Played till midnight, played till morning, 115
Played until the Yenadizze,
Till the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Of their treasures had despoiled them,
Of the best of all their dresses,
Shirts of deer-skin, robes of ermine, 120
Belts of wampum, crests of feathers,
Warlike weapons, pipes and pouches.
Twenty eyes glared wildly at him,
Like the eyes of wolves glared at him.

Said the lucky Pau-Puk-Keewis: 125
"In my wigwam I am lonely,
In my wanderings and adventures
I have need of a companion,
Fain would have a Meshinauwa,
An attendant and pipe-bearer. 130
I will venture all these winnings,

188 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

All these garments heaped about me,
All this wampum, all these feathers,
On a single throw will venture
All against the young man yonder!" 135
'T was a youth of sixteen summers,
'T was a nephew of Iagoo;
Face-in-a-Mist, the people called him.

As the fire burns in a pipe-head
Dusky red beneath the ashes, 140
So beneath his shaggy eyebrows
Glowed the eyes of old Iagoo.
"Ugh!" he answered very fiercely;
"Ugh!" they answered all and each one.

Seized the wooden bowl the old man, 145
Closely in his bony fingers
Clutched the fatal bowl, Onagon,
Shook it fiercely and with fury,
Made the pieces ring together
As he threw them down before him. 150

Red were both the great Kenabeeks,
Red the Ininewug, the wedge-men,
Red the Sheshebwug, the ducklings,
Black the four brass Ozawabeeks,
White alone the fish, the Keego; 155

Only five the pieces counted!

Then the smiling Pau-Puk-Keewis
Shook the bowl and threw the pieces;
Lightly in the air he tossed them,
And they fell about him scattered; 160
Dark and bright the Ozawabeeks,
Red and white the other pieces,
And upright among the others
One Ininewug was standing,
Even as crafty Pau-Puk-Keewis 165
Stood alone among the players,
Saying, "Five tens! mine the game is!"

Twenty eyes glared at him fiercely,
Like the eyes of wolves glared at him,
As he turned and left the wigwam, 170
Followed by his Meshinauwa,
By the nephew of Iagoo,
By the tall and graceful stripling,
Bearing in his arms the winnings,
Shirts of deer-skin, robes of ermine, 175
Belts of wampum, pipes and weapons.

"Carry them," said Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Pointing with his fan of feathers,
"To my wigwam far to eastward,

190 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

On the dunes of Nagow Wudjool!" 180

Hot and red with smoke and gambling
Were the eyes of Pau-Puk-Keewis
As he came forth to the freshness
Of the pleasant Summer morning.

All the birds were singing gayly, 185

All the streamlets flowing swiftly,
And the heart of Pau-Puk-Keewis
Sang with pleasure as the birds sing,
Beat with triumph like the streamlets,

As he wandered through the village, 190

In the early gray of morning,
With his fan of turkey-feathers,
With his plumes and tufts of swan's down,

Till he reached the farthest wigwam,
Reached the lodge of Hiawatha. 195

Silent was it and deserted;
No one met him at the doorway,
No one came to bid him welcome;
But the birds were singing round it,
In and out and round the doorway, 200

Hopping, singing, fluttering, feeding,
And aloft upon the ridge-pole
Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 191

Sat with fiery eyes, and, screaming,
Flapped his wings at Pau-Puk-Keewis. 205

“All are gone! the lodge is empty!”
Thus it was spake Pau-Puk-Keewis,
In his heart resolving mischief;—

“Gone is wary Hiawatha,
Gone the silly Laughing Water, 210
Gone Nokomis, the old woman,
And the lodge is left unguarded!”

By the neck he seized the raven,
Whirled it round him like a rattle,
Like a medicine-pouch he shook it, 215
Strangled Kahgahgee, the raven,
From the ridge-pole of the wigwam
Left its lifeless body hanging,
As an insult to its master,

As a taunt to Hiawatha. 220

With a stealthy step he entered,
Round the lodge in wild disorder
Threw the household things about him,
Piled together in confusion
Bowls of wood and earthen kettles, 225
Robes of buffalo and beaver,
Skins of otter, lynx, and ermine,

As an insult to Nokomis,
As a taunt to Minnehaha.

Then departed Pau-Puk-Keewis, 230
Whistling, singing through the forest,
Whistling gayly to the squirrels,
Who from hollow boughs above him
Dropped their acorn-shells upon him,
Singing gayly to the wood-birds, 235
Who from out the leafy darkness
Answered with a song as merry.

Then he climbed the rocky headlands
Looking o'er the Gitche Gumee,
Perched himself upon their summit, 240
Waiting full of mirth and mischief
The return of Hiawatha.

Stretched upon his back he lay there;
Far below him plashed the waters,
Plashed and washed the dreamy waters; 245
Far above him swam the heavens,
Swam the dizzy, dreamy heavens;
Round him hovered, fluttered, rustled,
Hiawatha's mountain chickens,
Flock-wise swept and wheeled about him, 250
Almost brushed him with their pinions.

And he killed them as he lay there,
Slaughtered them by tens and twenties,
Threw their bodies down the headland,
Threw them on the beach below him, 255
Till at length Kayoshk, the sea-gull,
Perched upon a crag above them,
Shouted: "It is Pau-Puk-Keewis!
He is slaying us by hundreds!
Send a message to our brother, 260
Tidings send to Hiawatha!"





XVII.

THE HUNTING OF PAU-PUK-KEEWIS.

ULL of wrath was
Hiawatha
When he came into
the village,

Found the people in confusion,
Heard of all the misdemeanors,
All the malice and the mischief, 5
Of the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis.

Hard his breath came through his nostrils,
Through his teeth he buzzed and muttered
Words of anger and resentment,
Hot and humming like a hornet. 10
"I will slay this Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Slay this mischief-maker!" said he.

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 195

"Not so long and wide the world is,
Not so rude and rough the way is,
That my wrath shall not attain him, 15
That my vengeance shall not reach him!"

Then in swift pursuit departed
Hiawatha and the hunters
On the trail of Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Through the forest, where he passed it, 20
To the headlands where he rested;
But they found not Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Only in the trampled grasses,
In the whortleberry-bushes,
Found the couch where he had rested, 25
Found the impress of his body.

From the lowlands far beneath them,
From the Muskoday, the meadow,
Pau-Puk-Keewis, turning backward,
Made a gesture of defiance, 30
Made a gesture of derision;
And aloud cried Hiawatha,
From the summit of the mountains:
"Not so long and wide the world is,
Not so rude and rough the way is, 35
But my wrath shall overtake you,
And my vengeance shall attain you!"

Over rock and over river,
Through the bush, and brake, and forest,
Ran the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis; 40
Like an antelope he bounded,
Till he came unto a streamlet
In the middle of the forest,
To a streamlet still and tranquil,
That had overflowed its margin, 45
To a dam made by the beavers,
To a pond of quiet water,
Where knee-deep the trees were standing,
Where the water-lilies floated,
Where the rushes waved and whispered. 50

On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis,
On the dam of trunks and branches,
Through whose chinks the water spouted,
O'er whose summit flowed the streamlet.
From the bottom rose the beaver, 55
Looked with two great eyes of wonder,
Eyes that seemed to ask a question,
At the stranger, Pau-Puk-Keewis.

On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis,
O'er his ankles flowed the streamlet, 60
Flowed the bright and silvery water,
And he spake unto the beaver,

With a smile he spake in this wise:
 "O my friend Ahmeek, the beaver,
 Cool and pleasant is the water; 65
 Let me dive into the water,
 Let me rest there in your lodges;
 Change me, too, into a beaver!"
 Cautiously replied the beaver,
 With reserve he thus made answer: 70
 "Let me first consult the others,
 Let me ask the other beavers."
 Down he sank into the water,
 Heavily sank he, as a stone sinks,
 Down among the leaves and branches, 75
 Brown and matted at the bottom.
 On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis,
 O'er his ankles flowed the streamlet,
 Spouted through the chinks below him,
 Dashed upon the stones beneath him, 80
 Spread serene and calm before him,
 And the sunshine and the shadows
 Fell in flecks and gleams upon him,
 Fell in little shining patches,
 Through the waving, rustling branches. 85
 From the bottom rose the beavers,
 Silently above the surface

Rose one head and then another,
 Till the pond seemed full of beavers,
 Full of black and shining faces. 90

To the beavers Pau-Puk-Keewis
 Spake entreating, said in this wise:
 "Very pleasant is your dwelling,
 O my friends! and safe from danger;
 Can you not with all your cunning, 95
 All your wisdom and contrivance,
 Change me, too, into a beaver?"

"Yes!" replied Ahmeek, the beaver,
 He the King of all the beavers,
 "Let yourself slide down among us, 100
 Down into the tranquil water."

Down into the pond among them
 Silently sank Pau-Puk-Keewis;
 Black became his shirt of deer-skin,
 Black his moccasins and leggins, 105
 In a broad black tail behind him
 Spread his fox-tails and his fringes;
 He was changed into a beaver.

"Make me large," said Pau-Puk-Keewis,
 "Make me large and make me larger, 110
 Larger than the other beavers."
 "Yes," the beaver chief responded,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 199

"When our lodge below you enter,
In our wigwam we will make you
Ten times larger than the others." 115

Thus into the clear brown water
Silently sank Pau-Puk-Keewis;
Found the bottom covered over
With the trunks of trees and branches,
Hoards of food against the winter, 120
Piles and heaps against the famine,
Found the lodge with arching doorway,
Leading into spacious chambers.

Here they made him large and larger,
Made him largest of the beavers, 125
Ten times larger than the others.
"You shall be our ruler," said they;
"Chief and king of all the beavers."

But not long had Pau-Puk-Keewis
Sat in state among the beavers, 130
When there came a voice of warning
From the watchman at his station
In the water-flags and lilies,
Saying, "Here is Hiawatha!
Hiawatha with his hunters!" 135

Then they heard a cry above them,
Heard a shouting and a tramping,

Heard a crashing and a rushing,
And the water round and o'er them
Sank and sucked away in eddies, 140
And they knew their dam was broken.

On the lodge's roof the hunters
Leaped, and broke it all asunder;
Streamed the sunshine through the crevice,
Sprang the beavers through the doorway, 145
Hid themselves in deeper water,
In the channel of the streamlet;
But the mighty Pau-Puk-Keewis
Could not pass beneath the doorway;
He was puffed with pride and feeding, 150
He was swollen like a bladder.

Through the roof looked Hiawatha,
Cried aloud, "O Pau-Puk-Keewis!
Vain are all your craft and cunning,
Vain your manifold disguises! 155
Well I know you, Pau-Puk-Keewis!"
With their clubs they beat and bruised him,
Beat to death poor Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Pounded him as maize is pounded,
Till his skull was crushed to pieces. 160

Six tall hunters, lithe and limber,

Bore him home on poles and branches,
 Bore the body of the beaver;
 But the ghost, the Jeebi in him,
 Thought and felt as Pau-Puk-Keewis, 165
 Still lived on as Pau-Puk-Keewis.

And it fluttered, strove, and struggled,
 Waving hither, waving thither,
 As the curtains of a wigwam
 Struggle with their thongs of deer-skin, 170
 When the wintry wind is blowing;
 Till it drew itself together,
 Till it rose up from the body,
 Till it took the form and features
 Of the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis 175
 Vanishing into the forest.

But the wary Hiawatha
 Saw the figure ere it vanished,
 Saw the form of Pau-Puk-Keewis
 Glide into the soft blue shadow 180
 Of the pine-trees of the forest;
 Toward the squares of white beyond it,
 Toward an opening in the forest,
 Like a wind it rushed and panted,
 Bending all the boughs before it, 185

And behind it, as the rain comes,
Came the steps of Híawatha.

To a lake with many islands
Came the breathless Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Where among the water-lilies 190

Pishnekuh, the brant, were sailing;
Through the tufts of rushes floating,
Steering through the reedy islands.
Now their broad black beaks they lifted,
Now they plunged beneath the water, 195
Now they darkened in the shadow,
Now they brightened in the sunshine.

"Pishnekuh!" cried Pau-Puk-Keewis,
"Pishnekuh! my brothers!" said he,
"Change me to a brant with plumage, 200
With a shining neck and feathers,
Make me large, and make me larger,
Ten times larger than the others."

Straightway to a brant they changed him,
With two huge and dusky pinions, 205
With a bosom smooth and rounded,
With a bill like two great paddles,
Made him larger than the others,
Ten times larger than the largest,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 203

Just as, shouting from the forest, 210
On the shore stood Hiawatha.

Up they rose with cry and clamor,
With a whirr and beat of pinions,
Rose up from the reedy islands,
From the water-flags and lilies. 215

And they said to Pau-Puk-Keewis:
"In your flying, look not downward,
Take good heed, and look not downward,
Lest some strange mischance should happen,
Lest some great mishap befall you!" 220

Fast and far they fled to northward,
Fast and far through mist and sunshine,
Fed among the moors and fen-lands,
Slept among the reeds and rushes.

On the morrow as they journeyed, 225
Buoyed and lifted by the South-wind,
Wafted onward by the South-wind,
Blowing fresh and strong behind them,
Rose a sound of human voices,
Rose a clamor from beneath them, 230
From the lodges of a village,
From the people miles beneath them.

For the people of the village

204 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Saw the flock of brant with wonder,
Saw the wings of Pau-Puk-Keewis 235
Flapping far up in the ether,
Broader than two doorway curtains.

Pau-Puk-Keewis heard the shouting,
Knew the voice of Hiawatha,
Knew the outcry of Iagoo, 240
And, forgetful of the warning,
Drew his neck in, and looked downward,
And the wind that blew behind him
Caught his mighty fan of feathers,
Sent him wheeling, whirling downward! 245

All in vain did Pau-Puk-Keewis
Struggle to regain his balance!
Whirling round and round and downward,
He beheld in turn the village
And in turn the flock above him, 250
Saw the village coming nearer,
And the flock receding farther,
Heard the voices growing louder,
Heard the shouting and the laughter;
Saw no more the flock above him, 255
Only saw the earth beneath him;
Dead out of the empty heaven,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 205.

Dead among the shouting people,
With a heavy sound and sullen,
Fell the brant with broken pinions. 260

But his soul, his ghost, his shadow,
Still survived as Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Took again the form and features
Of the handsome Yenadizze,
And again went rushing onward, 265
Followed fast by Hiawatha,
Crying: "Not so wide the world is,
Not so long and rough the way is,
But my wrath shall overtake you,
But my vengeance shall attain you!" 270

And so near he came, so near him,
That his hand was stretched to seize him,
His right hand to seize and hold him,
When the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis
Whirled and spun about in circles, 275
Fanned the air into a whirlwind,
Danced the dust and leaves about him,
And amid the whirling eddies
Sprang into a hollow oak-tree,
Changed himself into a serpent, 280
Gliding out through root and rubbish.

With his right hand Hiawatha
Smote amain the hollow oak-tree,
Rent it into shreds and splinters,
Left it lying there in fragments. 285

But in vain; for Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Once again in human figure,
Full in sight ran on before him,
Sped away in gust and whirlwind,
On the shores of Gitche Gumee, 290
Westward by the Big-Sea-Water,
Came unto the rocky headlands,
To the Pictured Rocks of sandstone,
Looking over lake and landscape.

And the Old Man of the Mountain, 295
He the Manito of Mountains,
Opened wide his rocky doorways,
Opened wide his deep abysses,
Giving Pau-Puk-Keewis shelter
In his caverns dark and dreary, 300
Bidding Pau-Puk-Keewis welcome
To his gloomy lodge of sandstone.

There without stood Hiawatha,
Found the doorways closed against him,
With his mittens, Minjekahwun, 305

Smote great caverns in the sandstone,
 Cried aloud in tones of thunder,
 "Open! I am Hiawatha!"
 But the Old Man of the Mountain
 Opened not, and made no answer 310
 From the silent crags of sandstone,
 From the gloomy rock abysses.

Then he raised his hands to heaven,
 Called imploring on the tempest,
 Called Waywassimo, the lightning, 315
 And the thunder, Annemeekee;
 And they came with night and darkness,
 Sweeping down the Big-Sea-Water
 From the distant Thunder Mountains;
 And the trembling Pau-Puk-Keewis 320
 Heard the footsteps of the thunder,
 Saw the red eyes of the lightning,
 Was afraid, and crouched and trembled.

Then Waywassimo, the lightning,
 Smote the doorways of the caverns, 325
 With his war-club smote the doorways,
 Smote the jutting crags of sandstone,
 And the thunder, Annemeekee,
 Shouted down into the caverns,

208 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Saying, "Where is Pau-Puk-Keewis!" 330
And the crags fell, and beneath them
Dead among the rocky ruins
Lay the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Lay the handsome Yenadizze,
Slain in his own human figure. 335

Ended were his wild adventures,
Ended were his tricks and gambols,
Ended all his craft and cunning,
Ended all his mischief-making,
All his gambling and his dancing, 340
All his wooing of the maidens.

Then the noble Hiawatha
Took his soul, his ghost, his shadow,
Spake and said: "O Pau-Puk-Keewis,
Never more in human figure 345
Shall you search for new adventures;
Never more with jest and laughter
Dance the dust and leaves in whirlwinds;
But above there in the heavens
You shall soar and sail in circles; 350
I will change you to an eagle,
To Keneu, the great war-eagle,
Chief of all the fowls with feathers,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 209

Chief of Hiawatha's chickens."

And the name of Pau-Puk-Keewis 355
Lingers still among the people,
Lingers still among the singers,
And among the story-tellers;
And in Winter, when the snow-flakes
Whirl in eddies round the lodges, 360
When the wind in gusty tumult
O'er the smoke-flue pipes and whistles,
"There," they cry, "comes Pau-Puk-Keewis;
He is dancing through the village,
He is gathering in his harvest!" 365





XVIII.

THE DEATH OF

KWASIND.

AR and wide among
the nations
Spread the name and
fame of Kwa-
sind;

No man dared to strive with Kwasind,
No man could compete with Kwasind.
But the mischievous Puk-Wudjies,
They the envious Little People,
They the fairies and the pygmies,
Plotted and conspired against him.

"If this hateful Kwasind," said they,
"If this great, outrageous fellow

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10

Goes on thus a little longer,
Tearing everything he touches,
Rending everything to pieces,
Filling all the world with wonder,
What becomes of the Puk-Wudjies? 15
Who will care for the Puk-Wudjies?
He will tread us down like mushrooms,
Drive us all into the water,
Give our bodies to be eaten
By the wicked Nee-ba-naw-baigs, 20
By the Spirits of the water!"

So the angry Little People
All conspired against the Strong Man,
All conspired to murder Kwasind,
Yes, to rid the world of Kwasind, 25
The audacious, overbearing,
Heartless, haughty, dangerous Kwasind!

Now this wondrous strength of Kwasind
In his crown alone was seated;
In his crown too was his weakness; 30
There alone could he be wounded,
Nowhere else could weapon pierce him,
Nowhere else could weapon harm him.

Even there the only weapon
That could wound him, that could slay him, 35

Was the seed-cone of the pine-tree,
 Was the blue cone of the fir-tree.
 This was Kwasind's fatal secret,
 Known to no man among mortals;
 But the cunning Little People, 40
 The Puk-Wudjies, knew the secret,
 Knew the only way to kill him.

So they gathered cones together,
 Gathered seed-cones of the pine-tree,
 Gathered blue cones of the fir-tree, 45
 In the woods by Taquamenaw,
 Brought them to the river's margin,
 Heaped them in great piles together,
 Where the red rocks from the margin
 Jutting overhang the river. 50
 There they lay in wait for Kwasind,
 The malicious Little People.

'T was an afternoon in Summer;
 Very hot and still the air was,
 Very smooth the gliding river, 55
 Motionless the sleeping shadows:
 Insects glistened in the sunshine,
 Insects skated on the water,
 Filled the drowsy air with buzzing,
 With a far-resounding war-cry. 60

Down the river came the Strong Man,
In his birch canoe came Kwasind,
Floating slowly down the current
Of the sluggish Taquamenaw,
Very languid with the weather, 65
Very sleepy with the silence.

From the overhanging branches,
From the tassels of the birch-trees,
Soft the Spirit of Sleep descended;
By his airy hosts surrounded, 70
His invisible attendants,
Came the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin;
Like the burnished Dush-kwo-ne-she,
Like a dragon fly, he hovered
O'er the drowsy head of Kwasind. 75

To his ear there came a murmur
As of waves upon a sea-shore,
As of far-off tumbling waters,
As of winds among the pine-trees;
And he felt upon his forehead 80
Blows of little airy war-clubs,
Wielded by the slumbrous legions
Of the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin,
As of some one breathing on him.

At the first blow of their war-clubs, 85

Fell a drowsiness on Kwasind;
 At the second blow they smote him,
 Motionless his paddle rested;
 At the third, before his vision
 Reeled the landscape into darkness, 90
 Very sound asleep was Kwasind.

So he floated down the river,
 Like a blind man seated upright,
 Floated down the Taquamenaw,
 Underneath the trembling birch-trees, 95
 Underneath the wooded headlands,
 Underneath the war encampment
 Of the pygmies, the Puk-Wudjies.

There they stood, all armed and waiting,
 Hurled the pine-cones down upon him, 100
 Struck him on his brawny shoulders,
 On his crown defenseless struck him.
 "Death to Kwasind!" was the sudden
 War-cry of the Little People.

And he sideways swayed and tumbled, 105
 Sideways fell into the river,
 Plunged beneath the sluggish water
 Headlong, as an otter plunges;
 And the birch canoe, abandoned,
 Drifted empty down the river, 110

Bottom upward swerved and drifted:
Nothing more was seen of Kwasind.

But the memory of the Strong Man
Lingered long among the people,
And whenever through the forest **115**
Raged and roared the wintry tempest,
And the branches, tossed and troubled,
Creaked and groaned and split asunder,
"Kwasind!" cried they; "that is Kwasind!
He is gathering in his fire-wood!" **120**





Strings of Black and White Wampum Shells.



XIX.

THE GHOSTS.

EVER stoops the soaring vulture
 On his quarry in the desert,
 On the sick or wounded bison,
 But another vulture,
 watching

From his high aerial look-out, 5
 Sees the downward plunge, and follows;
 And a third pursues the second,
 Coming from the invisible ether,
 First a speck, and then a vulture,
 Till the air is dark with pinions. 10

So disasters come not singly;
But as if they watched and waited,
Scanning one another's motions,
When the first descends, the others
Follow, follow, gathering flock-wise 15
Round their victim, sick and wounded,
First a shadow, then a sorrow,
Till the air is dark with anguish.

Now, o'er all the dreary Northland,
Mighty Peboan, the Winter, 20
Breathing on the lakes and rivers,
Into stone had changed their waters.
From his hair he shook the snow-flakes,
Till the plains were strewn with whiteness,
One uninterrupted level, 25
As if, stooping, the Creator
With his hand had smoothed them over.

Through the forest, wide and wailing,
Roamed the hunter on his snow-shoes;
In the village worked the women, 30
Pounded maize, or dressed the deer-skin;
And the young men played together
On the ice the noisy ball-play,
On the plain the dance of snow-shoes.

One dark evening, after sundown, 35

In her wigwam Laughing Water
Sat with old Nokomis, waiting
For the steps of Hiawatha
Homeward from the hunt returning.

On their faces gleamed the fire-light, 40
Painting them with streaks of crimson,
In the eyes of old Nokomis
Glimmered like the watery moonlight,
In the eyes of Laughing Water
Glistened like the sun in water; 45
And behind them crouched their shadows
In the corners of the wigwam,
And the smoke in wreaths above them
Climbed and crowded through the smoke-flue.

Then the curtain of the doorway 50
From without was slowly lifted;
Brighter glowed the fire a moment,
And a moment swerved the smoke-wreath,
As two women entered softly,
Passed the doorway uninvited, 55
Without word of salutation,
Without sign of recognition,
Sat down in the farthest corner,
Crouching low among the shadows.

From their aspect and their garments, 60

Strangers seemed they in the village;
 Very pale and haggard were they,
 As they sat there sad and silent,
 Trembling, cowering with the shadows.

Was it the wind above the smoke-flue, 65
 Muttering down into the wigwam?

Was it the owl, the Koko-koho,
 Hooting from the dismal forest?
 Sure a voice said in the silence:

"These are corpses clad in garments, 70
 These are ghosts that come to haunt you,
 From the kingdom of Ponemah,
 From the land of the Hereafter!"

Homeward now came Hiawatha
 From his hunting in the forest, 75
 With the snow upon his tresses,
 And the red deer on his shoulders.

At the feet of Laughing Water
 Down he threw his lifeless burden;
 Nobler, handsomer she thought him, 80
 Than when first he came to woo her,
 First threw down the deer before her,
 As a token of his wishes,
 As a promise of the future.

Then he turned and saw the strangers, 85

220 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Cowering, crouching with the shadows;
Said within himself, "Who are they?
What strange guests has Minnehaha?"
But he questioned not the strangers,
Only spake to bid them welcome 90
To his lodge, his food, his fireside.

When the evening meal was ready,
And the deer had been divided,
Both the pallid guests, the strangers,
Springing from among the shadows, 95
Seized upon the choicest portions,
Seized the white fat of the roebuck,
Set apart for Laughing Water,
For the wife of Hiawatha;
Without asking, without thanking, 100
Eagerly devoured the morsels,
Flitted back among the shadows
In the corner of the wigwam.

Not a word spake Hiawatha,
Not a motion made Nokomis, 105
Not a gesture Laughing Water;
Not a change came o'er their features;
Only Minnehaha softly
Whispered, saying, "They are famished;
Let them do what best delights them; 110

Let them eat, for they are famished."

Many a daylight dawned and darkened,
Many a night shook off the daylight
As the pine shakes off the snow-flakes
From the midnight of its branches; 115
Day by day the guests unmoving
Sat there silent in the wigwam;
But by night, in storm or starlight,
Forth they went into the forest,
Bringing fire-wood to the wigwam, 120
Bringing pine-cones for the burning,
Always sad and always silent.

And whenever Hiawatha
Came from fishing or from hunting,
When the evening meal was ready, 125
And the food had been divided,
Gliding from their darksome corner,
Came the pallid guests, the strangers,
Seized upon the choicest portions
Set aside for Laughing Water, 130
And without rebuke or question
Flitted back among the shadows.

Never once had Hiawatha
By a word or look reproved them;
Never once had old Nokomis 135

Made a gesture of impatience;
Never once had Laughing Water
Shown resentment at the outrage.
All had they endured in silence,
That the rights of guest and stranger, 140
That the virtue of free-giving,
By a look might not be lessened,
By a word might not be broken.

Once at midnight Hiawatha,
Ever wakeful, ever watchful, 145
In the wigwam, dimly lighted
By the brands that still were burning,
By the glimmering, flickering fire-light,
Heard a sighing, oft repeated,
Heard a sobbing as of sorrow. 150

From his couch rose Hiawatha,
From his shaggy hides of bison,
Pushed aside the deer-skin curtain,
Saw the pallid guests, the shadows,
Sitting upright on their couches, 155
Weeping in the silent midnight.

And he said: "O guests! why is it
That your hearts are so afflicted,
That you sob so in the midnight?
Has perchance the old Nokomis, 160

Has my wife, my Minnehaha,
Wronged or grieved you by unkindness,
Failed in hospitable duties?"



Then the shadows ceased from weeping,
Ceased from sobbing and lamenting, 165
And they said, with gentle voices:
"We are ghosts of the departed,

Souls of those who once were with you.
 From the realms of Chibiabos
 Hither have we come to try you, 170
 Hither have we come to warn you.

"Cries of grief and lamentation
 Reach us in the Blessed Islands:
 Cries of anguish from the living,
 Calling back their friends departed, 175
 Sadden us with useless sorrow.
 Therefore have we come to try you;
 No one knows us, no one heeds us.
 We are but a burden to you,
 And we see that the departed 180
 Have no place among the living.

"Think of this, O Hiawatha!
 Speak of it to all the people,
 That henceforward and forever
 They no more with lamentations 185
 Sadden the souls of the departed
 In the Islands of the Blessed.

"Do not lay such heavy burdens
 In the graves of those you bury,
 Not such weight of furs and wampum, 190
 Not such weight of pots and kettles,
 For the spirits faint beneath them.

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 225

Only give them food to carry,
Only give them fire to light them.

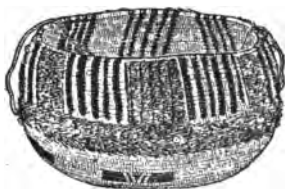
“Four days is the spirit’s journey 195
To the land of ghosts and shadows,
Four its lonely night encampments;
Four times must their fires be lighted.
Therefore, when the dead are buried,
Let a fire, as night approaches, 200
Four times on the grave be kindled,
That the soul upon its journey
May not lack the cheerful fire-light,
May not grope about in darkness.

“Farewell, noble Hiawatha! 205
We have put you to the trial,
To the proof have put your patience,
By the insult of our presence,
By the outrage of our actions.
We have found you great and noble. 210
Fail not in the greater trial,
Faint not in the harder struggle.”

When they ceased, a sudden darkness
Fell and filled the silent wigwam.
Hiawatha heard a rustle 215
As of garments trailing by him,
Heard the curtain of the doorway

Lifted by a hand he saw not,
Felt the cold breath of the night air,
For a moment saw the starlight; 220
But he saw the ghosts no longer,
Saw no more the wandering spirits
From the kingdom of Ponemah,
From the land of the Hereafter.





Indian Baskets, Decorated with Feathers and Quills.



XX.

THE FAMINE.

THE long and dreary
Winter!

O the cold and cruel
Winter!

Ever thicker, thicker,
thicker

Froze the ice on lake and river,
Ever deeper, deeper, deeper,
Fell the snow o'er all the landscape,
Fell the covering snow, and drifted
Through the forest, round the village.

5

Hardly from his buried wigwam
Could the hunter force a passage;
With his mittens and his snow-shoes

10

Vainly walked he through the forest,
Sought for bird or beast and found none,
Saw no track of deer or rabbit,
In the snow beheld no footprints, 15
In the ghastly, gleaming forest
Fell, and could not rise from weakness,
Perished there from cold and hunger.

O the famine and the fever!
O the wasting of the famine! 20
O the blasting of the fever!
O the wailing of the children!
O the anguish of the women!

All the earth was sick and famished;
Hungry was the air around them, 25
Hungry was the sky above them,
And the hungry stars in heaven
Like the eyes of wolves glared at them!

Into Hiawatha's wigwam
Came two other guests as silent 30
As the ghosts were, and as gloomy,
Waited not to be invited,
Did not parley at the doorway,
Sat there without word of welcome
In the seat of Laughing Water; 35
Looked with haggard eyes and hollow

At the face of Laughing Water.

And the foremost said: "Behold me!
I am Famine, Bukadawin!"

And the other said: "Behold me! 40
I am Fever, Ahkosewin!"

And the lovely Minnehaha
Shuddered as they looked upon her,
Shuddered at the words they uttered,
Lay down on her bed in silence, 45
Hid her face, but made no answer;
Lay there trembling, freezing, burning
At the looks they cast upon her,
At the fearful words they uttered.

Forth into the empty forest 50
Rushed the maddened Hiawatha;
In his heart was deadly sorrow,
In his face a stony firmness;
On his brow the sweat of anguish
Started, but it froze and fell not. 55

Wrapped in furs and armed for hunting,
With his mighty bow of ash-tree,
With his quiver full of arrows,
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
Into the vast and vacant forest 60
On his snow-shoes strode he forward.

"Gitche Manito, the Mighty!"
 Cried he with his face uplifted
 In that bitter hour of anguish,
 "Give your children food, O father! 65
 Give us food, or we must perish!
 Give me food for Minnehaha,
 For my dying Minnehaha!"

Through the far-resounding forest,
 Through the forest vast and vacant 70
 Rang that cry of desolation,
 But there came no other answer .
 Than the echo of his crying,
 Than the echo of the woodlands,
 "Minnehaha! Minnehaha!" 75

All day long roved Hiawatha
 In that melancholy forest,
 Through the shadow of whose thickets,
 In the pleasant days of Summer,
 Of that ne'er forgotten Summer, 80
 He had brought his young wife homeward
 From the land of the Dacotahs;
 When the birds sang in the thickets,
 And the streamlets laughed and glistened,
 And the air was full of fragrance, 85
 And the lovely Laughing Water

Said with voice that did not tremble,
 "I will follow you, my husband!"

In the wigwam with Nokomis,
 With those gloomy guests that watched
 her, 90

With the Famine and the Fever,
 She was lying, the Beloved,
 She the dying Minnehaha.

"Hark!" she said; "I hear a rushing,
 Hear a roaring and a rushing, 95
 Hear the Falls of Minnehaha
 Calling to me from a distance!"

"No, my child!" said old Nokomis,
 "'T is the night-wind in the pine-trees!"

"Look!" she said; "I see my father 100
 Standing lonely at his doorway,
 Beckoning to me from his wigwam
 In the land of the Dacotahs!"

"No, my child!" said old Nokomis,
 "'T is the smoke, that waves and beck-
 ons!" 105

"Ah!" said she, "the eyes of Pauguk
 Glare upon me in the darkness,
 I can feel his icy fingers
 Clasping mine amid the darkness!"

Hiawatha! Hiawatha!" 110

And the desolate Hiawatha,
Far away amid the forest,
Miles away among the mountains,
Heard that sudden cry of anguish,
Heard the voice of Minnehaha 115
Calling to him in the darkness,
"Hiawatha! Hiawatha!"

Over snow-fields waste and pathless,
Under snow-encumbered branches,
Homeward hurried Hiawatha, 120
Empty-handed, heavy-hearted,
Heard Nokomis moaning, wailing:
"Wahonowin! Wahonowin!
Would that I had perished for you,
Would that I were dead as you are! 125
Wahonowin! Wahonowin!"

And he rushed into the wigwam,
Saw the old Nokomis slowly
Rocking to and fro and moaning,
Saw his lovely Minnehaha 130
Lying dead and cold before him,
And his bursting heart within him
Uttered such a cry of anguish,
That the forest moaned and shuddered,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 233

That the very stars in heaven 135
Shook and trembled with his anguish.

Then he sat down, still and speechless,
On the bed of Minnehaha,
At the feet of Laughing Water,
At those willing feet, that never 140
More would lightly run to meet him,
Never more would lightly follow.

With both hands his face he covered,
Seven long days and nights he sat there,
As if in a swoon he sat there, 145
Speechless, motionless, unconscious
Of the daylight or the darkness.

Then they buried Minnehaha;
In the snow a grave they made her,
In the forest deep and darksome, 150
Underneath the moaning hemlocks;
Clothed her in her richest garments,
Wrapped her in her robes of ermine,
Covered her with snow, like ermine;
Thus they buried Minnehaha. 155

And at night a fire was lighted,
On her grave four times was kindled,
For her soul upon its journey
To the Islands of the Blessed.

From his doorway Hiawatha 160
Saw it burning in the forest,
Lighting up the gloomy hemlocks;
From his sleepless bed uprising,
From the bed of Minnehaha,
Stood and watched it at the doorway, 165
That it might not be extinguished,
Might not leave her in the darkness.
“Farewell!” said he, “Minnehaha!
Farewell, O my Laughing Water!
All my heart is buried with you, 170
All my thoughts go onward with you!
Come not back again to labor,
Come not back again to suffer,
Where the Famine and the Fever
Wear the heart and waste the body. 175
Soon my task will be completed,
Soon your footsteps I shall follow
To the Islands of the Blessed,
To the Kingdom of Ponemah,
To the Land of the Hereafter!” 180



XXI.

THE WHITE MAN'S FOOT.

N his lodge beside a
river,
Close beside a frozen
river,

Sat an old man, sad and lonely.
White his hair was as a snow-drift;
Dull and low his fire was burning,
And the old man shook and trembled,
Folded in his Waubewyon,
In his tattered white-skin-wrapper,
Hearing nothing but the tempest

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As it roared along the forest, 10
Seeing nothing but the snow-storm,
As it whirled and hissed and drifted.

All the coals were white with ashes,
And the fire was slowly dying,
As a young man, walking lightly, 15
At the open doorway entered.

Red with blood of youth his cheeks were,
Soft his eyes, as stars in Spring-time,
Bound his forehead was with grasses,
Bound and plumed with scented grasses; 20
On his lips a smile of beauty,
Filling all the lodge with sunshine,
In his hand a bunch of blossoms
Filling all the lodge with sweetness.

"Ah, my son!" exclaimed the old man, 25
"Happy are my eyes to see you.

Sit here on the mat beside me,
Sit here by the dying embers,
Let us pass the night together.
Tell me of your strange adventures, 30
Of the lands where you have travelled;
I will tell you of my prowess,
Of my many deeds of wonder."

From his pouch he drew his peace-pipe,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 237

Very old and strangely fashioned; 35
Made of red stone was the pipe-head,
And the stem a reed with feathers;
Filled the pipe with bark of willow,
Placed a burning coal upon it,
Gave it to his guest, the stranger, 40
And began to speak in this wise:
"When I blow my breath about me,
When I breathe upon the landscape,
Motionless are all the rivers,
Hard as stone becomes the water!" 45
And the young man answered, smiling:
"When I blow my breath about me,
When I breathe upon the landscape,
Flowers spring up o'er all the meadows,
Singing, onward rush the rivers!" 50
"When I shake my hoary tresses,"
Said the old man, darkly frowning,
"All the land with snow is covered;
All the leaves from all the branches
Fall and fade and die and wither, 55
For I breathe, and lo! they are not.
From the waters and the marshes
Rise the wild goose and the heron,
Fly away to distant regions,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 239

And upon the wigwam sweetly 85
Sang the bluebird and the robin,
And the stream began to murmur,
And a scent of growing grasses
Through the lodge was gently wafted.

And Segwun, the youthful stranger, 90
More distinctly in the daylight
Saw the icy face before him;
It was Peboan, the Winter!

From his eyes the tears were flowing,
As from melting lakes the streamlets, 95
And his body shrunk and dwindled
As the shouting sun ascended,
Till into the air it faded,
Till into the ground it vanished,
And the young man saw before him, 100
On the hearth-stone of the wigwam,
Where the fire had smoked and smouldered,
Saw the earliest flower of Spring-time,
Saw the Beauty of the Spring-time,
Saw the Miskodeed in blossom. 105

Thus it was that in the North-land
After that unheard-of coldness,
That intolerable Winter,
Came the Spring with all its splendor,

All its birds and all its blossoms, 110
 All its flowers and leaves and grasses.

Sailing on the wind to northward,
 Flying in great flocks, like arrows,
 Like huge arrows shot through heaven,
 Passed the swan, the Mahnahbezee, 115
 Speaking almost as a man speaks;
 And in long lines waving, bending
 Like a bow-string snapped asunder,
 Came the white goose, Waw-be-wawa;
 And in pairs, or singly flying, 120
 Mahng the loon, with clangorous pinions,
 The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
 And the grouse, the Mushkodasa.

In the thickets and the meadows
 Piped the bluebird, the Owaissa, 125
 On the summit of the lodges
 Sang the Opechee, the robin,
 In the covert of the pine-trees
 Cooed the pigeon, the Omemee,
 And the sorrowing Hiawatha, 130
 Speechless in his infinite sorrow,
 Heard their voices calling to him,
 Went forth from his gloomy doorway,
 Stood and gazed into the heaven,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 241

Gazed upon the earth and waters. 135

From his wanderings far to eastward,
From the regions of the morning,
From the shining land of Wabun,
Homeward now returned Iagoo,
The great traveller, the great boaster, 140
Full of new and strange adventures,
Marvels many and many wonders.

And the people of the village
Listened to him as he told them
Of his marvellous adventures, 145
Laughing answered him in this wise:
"Ugh! it is indeed Iagoo!
No one else beholds such wonders!"

He had seen, he said, a water
Bigger than the Big-Sea-Water, 150
Broader than the Gitche Gumee,
Bitter so that none could drink it!
At each other looked the warriors,
Looked the women at each other,
Smiled, and said, "It cannot be so!
Kaw!" they said, "it cannot be so!" 155

O'er it, said he, o'er this water
Came a great canoe with pinions,
A canoe with wings came flying,

Bigger than a grove of pine-trees, 160
Taller than the tallest tree-tops!

And the old men and the women
Looked and tittered at each other;
"Kaw!" they said, "we don't believe it!"

From its mouth, he said, to greet him, 165
Came Waywassimo, the lightning,
Came the thunder, Annemeekee!
And the warriors and the women
Laughed aloud at poor Iagoo;

"Kaw!" they said, "what tales you tell us!" 170

In it, said he, came a people,
In the great canoe with pinions
Came, he said, a hundred warriors;
Painted white were all their faces,
And with hair their chins were covered! 175
And the warriors and the women
Laughed and shouted in derision,
Like the ravens on the tree-tops,
Like the crows upon the hemlocks.

"Kaw!" they said, "what lies you tell us! 180
Do not think that we believe them!"

Only Hiawatha laughed not,
But he gravely spake and answered
To their jeering and their jesting:

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 243

"True is all Iagoo tells us; 185

I have seen it in a vision,
Seen the great canoe with pinions,
Seen the people with white faces,
Seen the coming of this bearded
People of the wooden vessel 190
From the regions of the morning,
From the shining land of Wabun.

"Gitche Manito the Mighty,
The Great Spirit, the Creator,
Sends them hither on his errand, 195
Sends them to us with his message.
Wheresoe'er they move, before them
Swarms the stinging fly, the Ahmo,
Swarms the bee, the honey-maker;
Wheresoe'er they tread, beneath them 200
Springs a flower unknown among us,
Springs the White-man's Foot in blossom.

"Let us welcome, then, the strangers,
Hail them as our friends and brothers,
And the heart's right hand of friendship 205
Give them when they come to see us.
Gitche Manito, the Mighty,
Said this to me in my vision.

"I beheld, too, in that vision

244 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

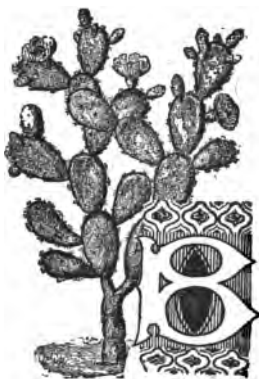
All the secrets of the future, 210
Of the distant days that shall be.

I beheld the westward marches
Of the unknown, crowded nations.
All the land was full of people,
Restless, struggling, toiling, striving, 215
Speaking many tongues, yet feeling
But one heart-beat in their bosoms.

In the woodlands rang their axes,
Smoked their towns in all the valleys,
Over all the lakes and rivers 220
Rushed their great canoes of thunder.

"Then a darker, drearier vision
Passed before me, vague and cloud-like:
I beheld our nation scattered,
All forgetful of my counsels, 225

Weakened, warring with each other;
Saw the remnants of our people
Sweeping westward, wild and woful,
Like the cloud-rack of a tempest,
Like the withered leaves of Autumn!" 230



XXII.

HIAWATHA'S DEPARTURE.

Y the shore of Gitche
Gumee,
By the shining Big-
Sea-Water,
At the doorway of his
wigwam,

In the pleasant summer morning,
Hiawatha stood and waited.
All the air was full of freshness,
All the earth was bright and joyous,

5

And before him, through the sunshine,
Westward toward the neighboring forest
Passed in golden swarms the Ahmo, 10
Passed the bees, the honey-makers,
Burning, singing in the sunshine.

Bright above him shone the heavens,
Level spread the lake before him;
From its bosom leaped the sturgeon, 15
Sparkling, flashing in the sunshine;
On its margin the great forest
Stood reflected in the water,
Every tree-top had its shadow,
Motionless beneath the water. 20

From the brow of Hiawatha
Gone was every trace of sorrow,
As the fog from off the water,
As the mist from off the meadow.
With a smile of joy and triumph, 25
With a look of exultation,
As of one who in a vision
Sees what is to be, but is not,
Stood and waited Hiawatha.

Toward the sun his hands were lifted, 30
Both the palms spread out against it,
And between the parted fingers

Fell the sunshine on his features,
Flecked with light his naked shoulders,
As it falls and flecks an oak-tree 35
Through the rifted leaves and branches.

O'er the water floating, flying,
Something in the hazy distance,
Something in the mists of morning,
Loomed and lifted from the water, 40
Now seemed floating, now seemed flying,
Coming nearer, nearer, nearer.

Was it Shingebis the diver?
Was it the pelican, the Shada?
Or the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah? 45
Or the white goose, Waw-be-wawa,
With the water dripping, flashing
From its glossy neck and feathers?

It was neither goose nor diver,
Neither pelican nor heron, 50
O'er the water, floating, flying,
Through the shining mist of morning,
But a birch canoe with paddles,
Rising, sinking on the water,
Dripping, flashing in the sunshine; 55
And within it came a people
From the distant land of Wabun,

248 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

From the farthest realms of morning
Came the Black-Robe chief, the Prophet,
He the Priest of Prayer, the Pale-face, 60
With his guides and his companions.

And the noble Hiawatha,
With his hands aloft extended,
Held aloft in sign of welcome,
Waited, full of exultation, 65
Till the birch canoe with paddles
Grated on the shining pebbles,
Stranded on the sandy margin,
Till the Black-Robe chief, the Pale-face,
With the cross upon his bosom, 70
Landed on the sandy margin.

Then the joyous Hiawatha
Cried aloud and spake in this wise:
"Beautiful is the sun, O strangers,
When you come so far to see us! 75
All our town in peace awaits you;
All our doors stand open for you;
You shall enter all our wigwams,
For the heart's right hand we give you.
"Never bloomed the earth so gayly, 80
Never shone the sun so brightly,
As to-day they shine and blossom

When you come so far to see us!
 Never was our lake so tranquil,
 Nor so free from rocks and sand-bars; 85
 For your birch canoe in passing
 Has removed both rock and sand-bar.

"Never before had our tobacco
 Such a sweet and pleasant flavor,
 Never the broad leaves of our corn-fields 90
 Were so beautiful to look on,
 As they seem to us this morning,
 When you come so far to see us!"

And the Black-Robe chief made answer,
 Stammered in his speech a little, 95
 Speaking words yet unfamiliar:
 "Peace be with you, Hiawatha,
 Peace be with you and your people,
 Peace of prayer, and peace of pardon,
 Peace of Christ, and joy of Mary!" 100

Then the generous Hiawatha
 Led the strangers to his wigwam,
 Seated them on skins of bison,
 Seated them on skins of ermine,
 And the careful old Nokomis 105
 Brought them food in bowls of bass-wood,
 Water brought in birchen dippers,

NAVAJO MATRON WEAVING A BLANKET.



*"Bring a wife with nimble fingers,
Heart and hand that move together."*

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 251

And the calumet, the peace-pipe,
Filled and lighted for their smoking.

All the old men of the village, 110
All the warriors of the nation,
All the Jossakeeds, the prophets,
The magicians, the Wabenos,
And the medicine-men, the Medas,
Came to bid the strangers welcome; 115
"It is well," they said, "O brothers,
That you come so far to see us;"

In a circle round the doorway,
With their pipes they sat in silence,
Waiting to behold the strangers, 120
Waiting to receive their message;
Till the Black-Robe chief, the Pale-face,
From the wigwam came to greet them,
Stammering in his speech a little,
Speaking words yet unfamiliar; 125
"It is well," they said, "O brother,
That you come so far to see us!"

Then the Black-Robe chief, the prophet,
Told his message to the people,
Told the purport of his mission, 130
Told them of the Virgin Mary,
And her blessed Son, the Saviour,

252 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

How in distant lands and ages
He had lived on earth as we do;
How he fasted, prayed, and labored; 135
How the Jews, the tribe accursed,
Mocked him, scourged him, crucified him;
How he rose from where they laid him,
Walked again with his disciples,
And ascended into heaven. 140

And the chiefs made answer, saying:
"We have listened to your message,
We have heard your words of wisdom,
We will think on what you tell us.
It is well for us, O brothers, 145
That you come so far to see us!"

Then they rose up and departed
Each one homeward to his wigwam,
To the young men and the women
Told the story of the strangers 150
Whom the Master of Life had sent them
From the shining land of Wabun.

Heavy with the heat and silence
Grew the afternoon of Summer,
With a drowsy sound the forest 155
Whispered round the sultry wigwam,
With a sound of sleep the water

Rippled on the beach below it;
 From the corn-fields shrill and ceaseless
 Sang the grasshopper, Pah-puk-keena; 160
 And the guests of Hiawatha,
 Weary with the heat of Summer,
 Slumbered in the sultry wigwam.

Slowly o'er the simmering landscape
 Fell the evening's dusk and coolness, 165
 And the long and level sunbeams
 Shot their spears into the forest,
 Breaking through its shields of shadow,
 Rushed into each secret ambush,
 Searched each thicket, dingle, hollow; 170
 Still the guests of Hiawatha
 Slumbered in the silent wigwam.

From his place rose Hiawatha,
 Bade farewell to old Nokomis,
 Spake in whispers, spake in this wise, 175
 Did not wake the guests, that slumbered:

"I am going, O Nokomis,
 On a long and distant journey,
 To the portals of the Sunset,
 To the regions of the home-wind, 180
 Of the Northwest wind, Keewaydin.
 But these guests I leave behind me,

254 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

In your watch and ward I leave them;
See that never harm comes near them,
See that never fear molests them, 185
Never danger nor suspicion,
Never want of food or shelter,
In the lodge of Hiawatha!"

Forth into the village went he,
Bade farewell to all the warriors, 190
Bade farewell to all the young men,
Spake persuading, spake in this wise:

"I am going, O my people,
On a long and distant journey;
Many moons and many winters 195
Will have come, and will have vanished,
Ere I come again to see you.
But my guests I leave behind me;
Listen to their words of wisdom,
Listen to the truth they tell you, 200
For the Master of Life has sent them
From the land of light and morning!"

On the shore stood Hiawatha,
Turned and waved his hand at parting;
On the clear and luminous water 205
Launched his birch canoe for sailing,
From the pebbles of the margin

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 255

Shoved it forth into the water;
Whispered to it, "Westward! westward!"
And with speed it darted forward. 210

And the evening sun descending
Set the clouds on fire with redness,
Burned the broad sky, like a prairie,
Left upon the level water
One long track and trail of splendor, 215
Down whose stream, as down a river,
Westward, westward Hiawatha
Sailed into the fiery sunset,
Sailed into the purple vapors,
Sailed into the dusk of evening. 220

And the people from the margin
Watched him floating, rising, sinking,
Till the birch canoe seemed lifted
High into that sea of splendor,
Till it sank into the vapors 225
Like the new moon slowly, slowly
Sinking in the purple distance.

And they said, "Farewell forever!"
Said, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
And the forests, dark and lonely, 230
Moved through all their depths of darkness,
Sighed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"

256 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

And the waves upon the margin
Rising, rippling on the pebbles,
Sobbed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!" 235
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
From her haunts among the fen-lands,
Screamed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"

Thus departed Hiawatha,
Hiawatha the Beloved, 240
In the glory of the sunset,
In the purple mists of evening,
To the regions of the home-wind,
Of the Northwest wind, Keewaydin,
To the Islands of the Blessed, 245
To the kingdom of Ponemah,
To the land of the Hereafter!









